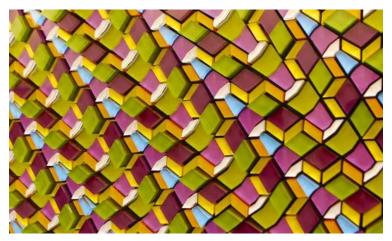




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Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019)

Editors' Introduction

Robert Carley, Stefanie A Jones, Eero Laine and Chris Alen Sula

ABSTRACT This issue features six full length articles, the final section in the universal basic income forum that has spanned three issues, the expansion of our Years in Cultural Studies project, and a number of book reviews.

This issue has *Lateral* working with a newly expanded team of editors and collaborators. We've grown significantly in the past year and are well positioned to continue our work into the new decade. We have noted it before, but it does bear repeating that academic publishing is a collective effort that relies intensely on the good will and often unremunerated efforts of its participants. We are committed to the ongoing and developing project of cultural studies in it various strains and especially as a political project that exposes and fights against racism, fascism, homophobia, misogyny, ableism, and capitalism in all of their exploitative forms. We see *Lateral* as a site of shared academic work, where theories can develop into and through action and vice versa. One of the ways we build this is through our continued emphasis on collaboration.

We're quite proud of this issue as it is exemplary of this collaboration and of the ways that the journal has grown in the past year. We have six full length articles, the final section in the universal basic income forum that has spanned three issues, the expansion of our Years in Cultural Studies project, and a number of book reviews.

In our lead article, "Webs of Relationships: Pedagogies of Citizenship and Modalities of Settlement for 'Musims' in Canada," Lucy El-Sherif tracks the racial politics of the citizenship process in Canada through an Arab lens and an indigenous analytic. El-Sherif's essay offers a case study that theorizes the entwinement of racialization and colonization in citizenship processes. El-Sherif theorizes the socio-spatial operation of citizenship where settler colonial histories are reproduced as a racial project, El-Sherif exploring how, for Canadians racialized as Muslim, belonging in Canada is contingent on subscribing to white settler capitalist colonial relations to land. Bringing together Sunera Thobani's concept of exalting the white subject and Sherene Razack's theorizations on Muslim eviction from Western politics, El-Sherif argues that those racialized as Muslim are compelled to either exalt whiteness or be evicted. The citizenship process, then, reinscribes the histories of white settler colonialism where every new immigrant's allegiance to the nation-state and uneasy subjection to a neoliberal multicultural identity at the same time persistently fractures potential forms of indigenous and black racial solidarity.

Stevphen Shukaitis and Joanna Figiel's contribution to this issue, "Publishing to Find Comrades: Constructions of Temporality and Solidarity in Autonomous Print Cultures" takes on a set of theoretical and research questions connected to open source publishing and expands these questions into the political field. By looking at open source publishing as a theoretical issue about cultural production and grounding it in concerns about social

(and political) reproduction–specifically the reproduction of the labor that sustains it—Shukaitis and Figiel trace the role of editorial workers, and include all other associated forms of cultural labor undertaken in the production chain, from distribution to retail. Their expansive and labor-based focus on "autonomous print cultures" politicizes the question of cultural reproduction showing how the sustainability of these instances of cultural production, whether virtual, digital, or print-based, is, in fact, largely a political question regarding how these projects relate to and are embedded within the goals of the social movement organizing that they emerge from. In Shukaitis's and Figiel's work, questions about labor, conditions, and the sustainability of these projects become all the more pressing for the continuity of the political communities that engender them. Their work also deepens and complicates cultural production by connecting it to social and political reproduction.

In "Viewing Japanese Incarceration from Above & Below: Imperial Landscape and Racial Liberalism in Ansel Adams's Born Free and Equal," Christian Ravela analyzes the "visual grammar" of this work for insights into frontier mythology, incarceration, and US domestic and imperial politics. Arguing that photographic gaze and the relationship between landscape and portrait in Born Free articulates the structure of feeling of midcentury racial liberalism, Ravela reveals the centrality of the landscape in powerfully linking viewers to this project. Americanization of incarcerated Japanese American bodies as deserving of rights claims within the US perversely positions the US as moral authority on democracy.

In "Producing Art in the Ruins of a Former Colonial Industrial Hub: Arts Practices in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe (2000–2017)," Khanyile Mlotshwa investigates how the conditions of cultural workers are affected by a specific conjuncture which he calls, "an imploding cultural landscape." With foundations in Marxist political economy that specify crucial dynamics in urban African post-industrial landscapes, this paper looks at how cultural workers in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city, negotiate "the informalization of their labour, wage squeezes, temporariness, uncertainty, and pernicious risks in their work." Based on in-depth interviews with a representative variety of creative artists and other content producers, Mlotshwa constructs and investigates a cultural landscapedisembedded from society and abandoned by economic forces—where, although, many artists have abandoned their work finding the risks of continuing too grave, there still exists a handful of artists who continue to struggle against all odds with the hope of building a sustainable arts industry in Zimbabwe's second largest city.

Corinne Mitsuye Sugino takes on a contemporary pop culture object in "Multicultural Redemption: Crazy Rich Asians and the Politics of Representation." In this piece Sugino analyzes the film and its reception to reveal the workings of contemporary narratives of racial reconciliation, "in which inclusion within hierarchy is rendered synonymous with redemption from racial violence." Because this project works through the enforcement of capitalism, white supremacy, and anti-black racism, multicultural redemption as a political strategy for Asian Americans utilizes hope to curtail liberatory political action. By illuminating this strategy, Sugino argues that "an uncompromising refusal of reconciling with an endemically racist society" is the necessary political alternative.

In "Crip Twitter and Utopic Feeling: How Disabled Twitter Users Reorganize Public Affect," Sohum Pal follows three Twitter accounts to explore answers to the question, "what can disabled protest look like?" Exploring the relationship between affect and political practice, Pal suggests that these twitter users establish an affect-based "bounded network" and explores what political action looks like in such a network. Finally, Pal demonstrates how these users and their followers circulate a powerful utopic affect of hope as a means of articulating demands, building community, and ensuring survival.

This issue includes the final part of the forum on Universal Basic Income (UBI), edited by David Zeglen. The forum began one year ago in the Fall 2018 issue of *Lateral* with initial arguments from <u>David Zeglen</u>, <u>Kimberly Klinger</u>, <u>Caroline West</u>, and <u>Lindsey Macdonald</u>. In the Spring 2019 issue, <u>Daniel Zamora and Anton Jäger offered a response to Zeglen</u>, <u>Tai</u> Neilson responded to Lindsey Macdonald, John Carl Baker replied to Kimberly Klinger, and Richard Todd Stafford responded to Caroline West. Following the last issue, the original authors were offered the opportunity to respond to the responses, that is, to have the last word on the matter (at least for the moment). Two of the authors, Zegelen and West, wrote additional arguments. Taken as a whole, the forum examines the theories, policies, and potential for UBI in a number of contexts. Spanning three issues, the forum is a significant editorial project for Zeglen and entails an extended form of intellectual inquiry that is absent in most public discourse and news cycles. The long-term forum extends even beyond the form of the singular and yearly academic conference, asking authors and readers to engage a topic in a sustained manner. The entire forum with the original articles, responses, and responses to the responses will be archived on the Lateral site along with other forums as they are published. As with all other material published at Lateral, we invite readers to engage and respond, to continue the conversation, by contributing articles and other work.

This issue marks a major advance in the Years in Cultural Studies timeline project with three new articles exploring the years 1956, 1968, and 1988. In "1956: The British New <u>Left and The 'Big-Bang' Theory of Cultural Studies</u>," Steven Gotzler frames an intellectual history of the emergent British New Left including several other notable "big-bang" moments happening elsewhere in 1956. Each of these moments and events, Gotzler argues, should have considerable bearing on the articulation of cultural studies in Britain given their broader resonances across literature, global labor history, the visual arts, and the women's movement. Gotzler's expansive versioning of the year 1956 provides a needed internationally and globally diverse and textured ground upon which to reconsider the mid-century foundations of the emergence of cultural studies beyond the customary focus on new left politics. "1968: A Turning Point in Cultural Studies," links the explosion in new social movements to our contemporary conjuncture wondering how these times might necessitate new pursuits in scholarly praxis, just as 1968 provided new directions for cultural studies. In "1968," Charnell Peters, Oreoluwa Olaniyan, Duncan Stewart, and Julia Berger argue that new social movements unsettled our collective understanding of "nation, belonging, and peoplehood" influencing the development and direction of cultural studies, as it attempted to investigate and understand the multifaceted socio-political shifts that constitute the events of 1968. The authors provide context for the "micro expressions of unrest" in The University of Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) by analyzing the broader historical and social events in which the CCCS was embedded. The authors then turn to an examination of the ways that cultural studies reflected on and negotiated studies of "marginalized and subaltern cultures" both in their respective historical contexts and for the emerging field of cultural studies. Lastly, they focus on the emergence of key texts within cultural studies in 1968 including cultural studies' responses to the texts that shaped it. In "1988: The Crisis in Marxist Cultural Theory," Sebastiaan Gorissen, Elise Homan, and Ryan Kor-Sins consider the year 1988 as a "turning point" for cultural theory through three key texts: Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, the essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" by Gayatri Spivak, and The Hard Road to Renewal, Stuart Hall's book on Thatcherism. These texts, they argue, redefined Marxism through their focus on underrepresented and undertheorized concepts that held unique value for cultural studies' understanding of social formations, conjunctural analysis, and concepts of the subject. Although each of these texts had different purposes, themes, and theories, the authors argue that if productively read together the year 1988 exhibits a

unique moment in Marxist cultural theory bursting forth from out of a prior, decades-long, resurgence in scholarship devoted to Marxism.

We are happy to note here the excellent work of book review editors, Beenash Jafri and David L. Reznik, who have greatly expanded the section and the breadth of coverage we can offer in our reviews. We'll continue to publish book reviews on a rolling basis. Please be in touch with the book review editors regarding a book you want to review or to arrange for a copy of your own book to be sent to *Lateral* for review.

Many thanks to all of the *Lateral* contributors and editors for all of their work in bringing this issue to press. Thanks also to the CSA leadership and board for their continued support and various efforts to continue developing the project of cultural studies.

Finally, in continuing our efforts to make work available as soon as possible, in early 2020 we will be publishing a forum on "US Gun Culture and the Performance of Racial Sovereignty," edited by Lindsay Livingston and Alex Young. Like the book reviews, which are published on a rolling basis, the forum will be archived with the next full issue.

å <u>Bio</u>

Robert Carley

Robert F. Carley is Assistant Professor of International Studies at Texas A&M University, College Station. He serves on the editorial board of *Sociological Focus: Journal of the North Central Sociological Association,* is co-coordinator of The Union for Democratic Communications, and is a coeditor of *Lateral: Journal of the Cultural Studies Association.* He is the author of *Culture and Tactics: Gramsci, Race, and The Politics of Practice* (SUNY Press 2019), *Autonomy, Refusal, and The Black Bloc* (Rowman and Littlefield International 2019), and *Collectivities: Politics at the Intersections of Disciplines* (2016). In 2017, he received The North Central Sociological Association's Scholarly Achievement Award for his article "Ideological Contention: Antonio Gramsci and the Connection between Race and Social Movement Mobilization in Early 20th Century Italy" (2016).

å <u>Bio</u>

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≜ Bio



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Chris Alen Sula is Associate Professor and Coordinator of Digital Humanities and Data Analytics & Visualization at Pratt Institute's School of Information. He teaches graduate courses in digital humanities, information visualization, critical theory, and community building and engagement. His research applies visualization and network science to humanities datasets, especially those chronicling the history of philosophy. He has also published articles on citation studies in the humanities; the connection between digital humanities, libraries, and cultural heritage institutions; the politics of technology; and ethical and activist uses of visualization.



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Lucy El-Sherif, "Webs of Relationships: Pedagogies of Citizenship and Modalities of Settlement for 'Muslims' in Canada," *Lateral* 8.1 (2019).

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Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019)

Webs of Relationships: Pedagogies of Citizenship and Modalities of Settlement for "Muslims" in Canada

Lucy El-Sherif

ABSTRACT Immigrants to Canada must pass a set of pedagogical gate-keeping exercises that compel settler socio-spatial relations to allow them to come into the fort of the nation-state as neoliberal multicultural subjects. Bringing together Sunera Thobani's concept of exalting the white subject and Sherene Razack's theorizations on Muslim eviction from Western politics, I argue that those racialized as Muslim are positioned as perpetual immigrants, compelled to exalt whiteness or be evicted. Caught between an unresolved tension of settler spatial relations to nation and Indigenous spatial relations to Land, I examine what decolonial subject positions are available for "Muslims" using the Canadian citizenship study guide and oath as focal points. I foreground an Indigenous analytic and my Arab lived experience to do a contrapuntal reading of the social construction of Canada in the study guide and trace how the relationships to nation espoused in the manual are incommensurable with the relationships to Land fundamental to Indigenous worldviews. Throughout the paper, I draw on the experience of Masuma Khan, who was censured by her university and the public when she advocated that Canada 150 be remembered as Indigenous genocide rather than a celebration of nationhood, to unpack how racialization colonizes and colonization racializes.

During the Canada 150 celebrations of confederation in 2017, the Dalhousie Student Union passed a motion declaring that the student union would not be participating in the celebrations that summer. Their rationale for the motion was that they deemed the nation-wide yearlong festival a celebration of ongoing colonialism towards Indigenous people, specifically towards Mi'kmaq people on their unceded territory. The motion had been proposed by Masuma Khan, the vice president of the student council and a hijabi Muslim woman, and it was Khan who faced the brunt of campus anger at the decision in pointedly racialized attacks. She responded by writing an angry Facebook post describing how standing in solidarity with Indigenous people needed to take precedence over white feelings, saying: "white fragility can kiss my ass. Your white tears aren't sacred, this land is." Khan faced a barrage of hate speech online directed at her personally and in response to news organizations covering the story. The hate speech attacked Khan in terms of her religion and gender, and much of the news commentary revolved around her being Muslim and perceived as foreign. Despite being a born-and-bred Canadian citizen, she was told to go back to where she came from, to be grateful to the country that welcomed her parents, and to assimilate to Canada's heritage and tolerant multiculturalism.³ Dalhousie University initiated disciplinary action against Khan, but later halted its process, opting to move to university dialogue sessions instead—sessions to which Khan was noticeably not invited. Commenting on Dalhousie's stepping back from disciplinary action. Khan remarked.

The reality is this doesn't end for me. I'm still getting those hateful messages, I'm still being told to go back, I'm still being called a terrorist... I would like the conversation to go back to where it started, and that's talking about

reconciliation through solidarity with Indigenous people, learning about the territory that we're on. $\frac{4}{}$

Muslims live in Canada, are born in Canada, have multi-generational genealogies in Canada, and yet they are seen as not really belonging in Canada. ⁵ The citizenship of racialized Others offers a case to chart the tension between competing socio-spatial relationships: a national relationship to a settler colonial Canada celebrating its confederation, which Masuma Khan was expected to maintain, versus a land-based relationship to territory that upholds Indigeneity, which she backed instead. This article examines the ways that Canadian citizenship positions its citizens racialized as Muslim, who find themselves caught in a contradictory position between overt exclusion and inclusion into a nation-state defined in white settler terms. 6 Following Khan's articulation, I prioritize Indigenous thought regarding relationship with Land—which is sacred and contextualized, distinct from the physical formation land—to examine "Muslim" Canadians' relation to Land and nation. I understand citizenship as a pedagogical process through Audra Simpson's expansive definition of the term: "citizenship, instantiated in different ways, as a living form of claiming, of being claimed, and of feeling within the polity, rather than an act of government conferral."

This definition allows us to account for how orientalist logic structures "Muslim" citizenship in many different registers, including the nation as an imagined cultural-political community $\frac{9}{2}$ and the state as a legal geopolitical entity. Sherene Razack describes how those perceived as Muslims are racialized to be under constant threat of eviction from both the nation and its social rights, as well as the state and its legal rights. 10 "Muslim" belonging and presence in Canada is tenuous, always in a place that is at risk of being physically or symbolically evicted, and as I argue elsewhere, seen as never really there to begin with. 11 Yet much scholarship on settler colonialism speaks of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the binary terms of Native-Settler, erasing how processes of settlement are different for racialized groups, while the thoughtful and growing scholarship theorizing non-Indigenous racialized people on Turtle Island remains under-discussed. 12

Theorizing Black people's presence on Turtle Island, Tiffany Lethabo King makes the case that we need to think about settlement processes, the structural positions they make available and the subjectivities they shape, rather than settler as an identity label because processes more precisely trace the intricate differential flows of power and push us to rethink our lateral relationships together. 13 She argues for thinking about these processes that make Black people into "settled-slaves" as modalities of settlement, interrogating them as modes of governance for racialized bodies. 14 What do we find when we trace the citizenship process as a modality of settlement for those racialized as Muslim? A simmering racialization flared up when Khan challenged colonization, demonstrating that citizenship for "Muslims" has a mercurial quality and that her challenging colonization exposes an outrage based on race: "How dare you people?" Khan was relating her belonging to Indigenous people and "the territory that we're on," while dominant society was disciplining her to relate to the white nation her parents had immigrated to ("I'm still being told to go back"). What did her defiance mean, and why did it provoke such reactions? What is the spatiality of the code that she spurned? What spatial-racial conditions does the citizenship process and Khan's experience tell us about what it means to become—and remain—social citizens? A primary object of my research is to respond to J. Kēhaulani Kauanui's call concerning those whose work takes up settler colonialism to pair this work with an Indigenous analytic. 15 Because racialization and colonization operate as threads knotted together, as Chickasaw scholar Jodi Byrd points out, $\frac{16}{10}$ the precarious citizenship and belonging available to racialized Others, such as

Khan, provides us with insight into how these systems of power interlock, reinforcing each other.

To that end, I unpack two key citizenship processes in which the entwinement of racialization and colonization are evident in Canada: the citizenship study guide, *Discover Canada: Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship*, and the citizenship oath of allegiance to the queen. By examining these two formal articulations of citizenship, I aim to show how the socio-spatial relations inscribed in Canada's official citizenship process were the parameters by which Khan was institutionally and socially judged, by Dalhousie and her detractors, respectively. I demonstrate the ways in which settler colonialism and orientalism are constitutive of each other in *Discover Canada* and the oath, as they shine a light on curricular and pedagogical processes of settlement. In highlighting the sociospatial relations immigrants are expected to have and carry forward in their lives as Canadians, I argue that they explicitly articulate the terms of belonging in citizenship as a racial-colonial project. Khan's story demonstrates how these terms of belonging do not go away, even with succeeding generations, making *Discover Canada* a site where settler colonialism and orientalism converge for "Muslim" immigrants who are always already "fresh off the boat" temporally and without roots in Canada spatially. 17

If citizenship is a racializing, dispossessing project, as Sunera Thobani argues, ¹⁸ I ask, how does it spatially operate? I argue that citizenship as a racial project operates through matrices of socio-spatial relations that are structured by white settler capitalist colonialism. For those racialized as Muslim, belonging in Canada is contingent on their subscribing to white settler capitalist colonial relations to land as opposed to Indigenous ways of relating to Land. To resist this, I use Indigenous ways of relating to Land to help us understand how racializing and colonizing operate through citizenship. ¹⁹

This essay is, in part, a way of analyzing my own experience in becoming a Canadian citizen. Ten years ago, Discover Canada was a document that I had to study to pass the citizenship exam, and I had to affirm the oath of allegiance to the queen, as an Egyptian British Muslim hijabi at the time. Although I was born British, I had never had to swear allegiance to the queen, but to become Canadian I did. As an Arab Muslim immigrant who is complicit²⁰ in settler colonialism on Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee lands, my Arabness works as an afocal lens, layering an Arab understanding of settler colonialism with an Indigenous analytic. The Israeli occupation of Palestine structures my recognition that settler colonialism's dispossession, genocide, and racialization of Turtle Island's Indigenous people is ongoing and that performing settler colonial citizenship is complicit in the lived daily violence towards them. Also, as a mother I have to ask myself, how do I teach my children a "Good Way" 21 of belonging on this Land that will not harm them? Cree scholar Shawn Wilson describes ontology as a point of light at the center of our being that connects to other points of light at the center of other beings, and by tracing the outline of a person's web of relationships, our bodies take form. 22 What is the web of relationships I am part of, even if I cannot see them, even if I do not immediately recognize them? Discover Canada is the state's understanding of what it means to belong to Canada in a way that makes one acceptable, but what if this state recognition is not a Good Way?

Following this introduction, I give a brief overview of *Discover Canada* and the citizenship oath by contextualizing and describing their histories. I examine the oath of citizenship and how it demonstrates relations of power between the state and immigrants that perpetuate settler colonialism through what Unangax scholar Eve Tuck and Latinx scholar Rubén Gaztambide-Fernandez call settler futurities—racial-spatial colonial constructs that operate to perpetuate settler futures. I draw on Blackfoot scholar Dwayne Donald's concept of fort pedagogy to demonstrate how the oath functions to allow immigrants into the fold of the nation on racialized terms, terms that embody particular

relationships with nation and Land. 24 Next, I use Henri Lefebvre's idea of the social construction of space $\frac{25}{2}$ and Edward Said's method of contrapuntal reading $\frac{26}{2}$ to disrupt colonial narratives and unpack the social construction of space along the three dimensions Lefebvre articulates: spatial imaginaries, spatial practices and spatial planning. By thinking about the social construction of space through these three dimensions and reading the colonial construction of space against Indigenous scholars' relations to Land, I am teasing out how we relate to the nation through spatial settler futurities. Finally, I examine how Discover Canada specifically racializes "Muslims." Overall, I argue that citizenship compels a menu of limited futurities that is always already settler colonial, for "Muslims" who are always already contingent. Throughout, I draw on Masuma Khan's well-articulated experience of Indigenous solidarity to demonstrate how citizenship as a settlement project functions for those racialized as Muslim, to interrogate how Discover Canada and the citizenship oath are formal sites of citizenship that spectacularly articulate understandings of relationships to nation and obfuscate Indigenous relationships to Land. Though Khan was not an immigrant, her experience demonstrates the precariousness of her belonging; and while not all immigrants are racialized as Muslim, Khan's experience and its significations highlight how "Muslims" are an extreme example of how colonization racializes and racialization colonizes.

Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship

In unpacking the socio-spatial construction of Canada, there are few sites as richly articulated as the citizenship study guide. When the guide was created in 1947, the Liberal government of the time described the need to teach new Canadians the "essence" of their adopted country. The first edition, *How to Become a Canadian Citizen*, consisted of British colonial versions of history, geography, and culture. The study guide's narrative has remained fairly consistent through its various iterations over decades under different governments.

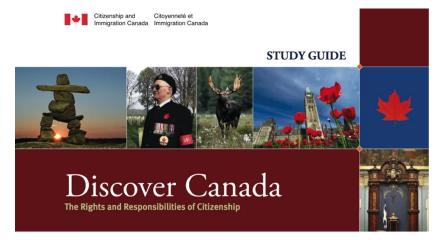


Figure 1: *Discover Canada* cover page. Photos, clockwise: Inukshuk; war veteran; moose; Parliament Hill; Blue Hall. Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

The social life of this structural narrative that the nation tells itself about itself gains power from public discourse that echoes it in various forms and installments as the shared story of Canada. ²⁹ It could be argued that the oath and the study guide should not be taken too seriously, as they belong to a short moment that new citizens quickly forget once they attain their citizenship. However, the citizenship oath is important enough that immigration officials circulate it among citizen-hopefuls and watch as they recite it to

make sure that their lips are moving to the words of the oath. ³⁰ Prospective citizens risk denial of Canadian citizenship if they fail to score at least fifteen out of twenty on the citizenship test, which is based on the study guide's curriculum. ³¹ Given that citizenhopefuls between the ages of 18 and 54 must take the citizenship test and oath, much of Canada's immigrant population has passed the test on some version of this story and taken the oath. ³² Thus, the study guide is an important formal Canadian national story linking to and echoing other stories of Canada, collectively forming a lens through which immigrants are compelled to understand their belonging and citizenship. Taken together, the oath and study guide curriculum function as gate-keeping exercises for the nation, permitting only those who profess allegiance to its socio-political order to become citizens. The importance of the act of taking the oath was made singularly explicit for Muslims in the 2015 Canadian federal election, nicknamed "The Niqab Election." An election flashpoint became whether Zunera Ishaq, a Muslim woman who wears the face covering, should be allowed to do so when taking her citizenship oath, even though she was open to removing it in front of female officers. ³³

In interrogating the study guide and oath for their pedagogical functions and what they tell us about the social space of Canada, I am cautious not to assume that all Muslims in Canada are immigrants. The national stories in *Discover Canada* and the relationships espoused in the oath are the Canadian story that is repeated *ad infinitum* in Canadian public pedagogy, 34 and even though Khan was not an immigrant and did not have to take a citizenship exam or an oath, they still espouse the relationship to nation she was expected to have as a racialized woman. The backlash she faced as a result of her solidarity with Indigenous people demonstrates how Canadians such as Khan have to depict their solidarity to Indigenous people through the framework of the settler colonial nation or face serious consequences.

If the oath and *Discover Canada* demonstrate how the citizenship process offers a racialized menu of limited subject positions for Others such as Khan's family to become citizens of the Canadian state, this menu does not expand with succeeding generations to the point of equality with white citizens. A dissenting, decolonizing subject position must not be permitted for "Muslims" such as Khan. In fact, for Khan to avoid social eviction, she needed to continue to respect the boundaries of that racial project, demonstrating that the subject positions the oath and study guide make available and unavailable remain protected as an organizing racial matrix of Canada even for subsequent generations. If *Discover Canada* and the oath are sites where settler colonialism and orientalism converge for perpetually fresh-off-the-boat "Muslim" immigrants, I am interested in exploring how this particular imbrication of racialization and colonization is manifest. As pedagogies of citizenship, 35 they reliably demonstrate the relational production of racialized subject positions and show that Muslimness is not considered to be "of Canada," as well as what terms of belonging are offered to "Muslims," be they precarious migrants, seventh-generation Canadians, Express Entry permanent residents, or refugee seekers.

The Logic of Racial Capitalism: Relationships to Nation, Relationships to Land, and Citizenship as a Modality of Settlement

Examining Khan's incident through the lens of the relationship between citizenship, Land, and nation reveals rich paradoxes in racialized people's ways of belonging in Canada. Radhika Mohanram's argument of the "metonymic link between bodies, landscape and nation...[which] function to temporarily replace one another" makes it possible to see how the landscape unites bodies in identity and patriotic feeling while simultaneously

undermining Indigenous Canadians' relationship to their Land and discursively favoring settler sovereignty. Settler nations, which discursively position communal place-based relationships to Land in service of Cartesian capitalist relationships to nation, link bodies to identity through their varying relationships to the nation. 37 "Capitalism is racial capitalism," Cedric Robinson teaches us, 38 and we can then understand how differing relationships to Land and nation reveal the matrix of social relations as a colonizing, racializing structure organized by the logic of racial capitalism. 39 Jodi Melamed develops this further, explaining how "Muslims" enter into this system of racial capitalism as neoliberal multicultural subjects who can contribute to capitalism—that is, as waged laborers or skilled professionals, integral parts of the capitalist project and its competitiveness, alibis against the racism the capitalist state is founded on. 40 Yet because neoliberal multiculturalism displaces racism based on skin color in order to racialize based on a cultural model, the distinction between the civilized multicultural Western subject and the barbaric monocultural "Muslim" subject is anything but smooth. For example, neoliberal multiculturalism results in paradoxes such as the Bush administration providing copies of the Quran to Guantanamo Bay detainees even as it withheld their rights to due process. 41 Privileged and disadvantaged people gain differing access to the capitalist social structure, reconfiguring conventional racial groups, while democracy and nationalism are foot soldiers of a logic that shrinks collective relations to the political, and multiculturalism differentiates while homogenizing to erase complex social relations and exploit its manufactured difference. 42 It is the logic of racial capitalism that shapes social relations towards land and nation, such that contributing to settler capitalist colonialism as neoliberal multicultural subjects forms the bedrock of "Muslim" belonging to the nation-state.

Unpacking the kinds of discursive acrobatics that need to be made for this belonging to happen makes clear how those racialized as Muslims are in a precarious and contingent position based on two discursive moves: exaltation and eviction. Exalting the white national subject is the central socio-political process of citizenship for racialized people in Canada, argues Sunera Thobani. 43 This socializing process of exalting the white national in a settler colonial nation renders citizenship for racialized immigrants a simultaneously immigrant-racializing and Indigenous-dispossessing project. 44 Changing the citizenship requirements for Canada from outright racist (whites preferred) to a point system in 1967 enhanced Canada's image from a settler colony to a liberal democracy, and morphed the white exalted Canadian subject from a white racial identity to a civil and political Canadian identity, in effect obfuscating racial capitalism's economic need for more workers under a veneer of liberalism. 45 Exaltation helps us understand how the state makes particular structural subject positions available for racialized immigrants, positions that must always support a politics of recognition through appeals to the settler state and its self-validating laws, especially when we bring it alongside the consequences for racialized immigrants in their own unique specificity. "Muslims" must be in agreement not only with the dominant group's exaltation of itself and its corresponding racial matrix, but also use this matrix to hierarchically structure their social relations with other racialized groups, or face dire consequences.

The "Muslim" exaltation of whiteness required by the logic of racial capitalism must stand not only on the dispossession of Indigenous people, but centrally on the denigration of Blackness. Whiteness as a subject position, or what George Lipstiz terms "the possessive investment in whiteness," 46 is financially and socially rewarding, and the relational dominance of what Ghassan Hage terms "White Nation Fantasy" is lucrative indeed. 47 Whiteness as a system of power both requires and rewards immigrants for being politically white; this means aspiring to systems of power and distancing themselves from political Blackness, a subject position James Cone describes as directed towards

overthrowing those systems of power. 48 "Muslims"—in particular Arab and South Asian immigrant "Muslims" who are in greater proximity to whiteness—have more often than not distanced themselves from Blackness and eschewed solidarity with Black people, even though there has long been a sizeable and politically involved Black Muslim community in the United States, for example. In part, this relates to how race as an apparatus of power shapes racial formation such that whiteness and Blackness, rather than being only essentialized identities, are political conditions. 49 "Muslims" claims to whiteness—particularly for those who had some measure of racial mobility cut short by 9/11—appeal to and are invested in white subject positions rather than in Black subject positions that seek to disrupt structures of domination.

Disrupting structures of domination complicates the already slippery place those racialized as Muslim have in the West, whose belonging is challenged in multiple registers. As Sherene Razack argues, Muslims are spatially evicted from Western law and politics, their tenuous presence always in a place that is at risk of being physically or symbolically ousted. 50 This eviction happens along a spectrum of "stigmatization, surveillance, incarceration, abandonment, torture, and bombs," and it is worthwhile unpacking this spectrum of eviction from a Canadian perspective. 51 Khan's stigmatization took the form of her eviction from social citizenship, as she did not exalt the settler colonial national celebrations. The heightened surveillance Canadian Muslims are subject to by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) comes in such banal forms as mosque moles 52 and intelligence agents' interrogating Muslim student association leadership on campuses, $\frac{53}{2}$ and needs to be read as an eviction from privacy rights. When Canada deports permanent residents who commit crimes "back" to countries with civil wars and to which they have little connection, 54 and a Canadian minor is left to languish in Guantanamo for years, the state is abandoning its people and withholding their citizenship rights. 55 The torture of Canadians Abousfian Abdelrazik and Maher Arar (as well as others) under brutal regimes with the cooperation of Canadian officials can only be seen as an eviction from human rights. 56 Meanwhile, bombing is an eviction from grievability rights, seen in the way Somali, Pakistani, and Palestinian victims (to name but a few) of Western allied wars and arms supply are seen by the public as collateral damage (if they are seen at all). Eviction is thus part of a "racial project" that situates Muslims as always-already cast out from the national imaginary and subject to having their rights suspended. 57 Bringing exaltation and eviction together, Khan was already in proximity to being evicted because of her perceived Muslimhood; her belonging was precarious and contingent before she did anything. Refusal to exalt the white national subject and its necessary spatial-racial relations is not a subject position the duo of exaltation and eviction make available to her. Nowhere is it clearer that "Muslim" belonging is contingent upon exaltation of the white settler capitalist colonial subject than when "Muslims" try to decolonize their belonging on this stolen Land. Hidden in plain sight is how their relationship with the settler state, as an imposed relationship to nation, makes particular subject positions available and unavailable, as well as how it simultaneously subsumes and erases their relationship with Land.

How is this duo of exaltation and eviction spatially accomplished in citizenship processes? What might an immigrant relationship to Land look like if we analyze the spatial construction of Canada in *Discover Canada* and the oath of citizenship alongside an understanding of Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies of Land? What kinds of subject positions become available for those racialized as Muslim if, like Masuma Khan did, we relate "Muslim" belonging here through other kinds of relationships?

The Queen, the Citizenship Oath, and the Grammar of Gate-Keeping



Figure 2. The oath of Citizenship all prospective citizens to Canada must swear/affirm in *Discover Canada*, p. 2.

The first item in *Discover Canada* describes Canadians' relationship to the queen:

In Canada, we profess our loyalty to a person who represents all Canadians and not to a document such as a constitution, a banner such as a flag, or a geopolitical entity such as a country. In our constitutional monarchy, these elements are encompassed by the Sovereign (Queen or King). It is a remarkably simple yet powerful principle: Canada is personified by the Sovereign just as the Sovereign is personified by Canada. 58

How does the queen, as a stand-in for the nation-state, operate to spatially order Canada? What is at stake in the statement, "Canada is personified by the Sovereign just as the Sovereign is personified by Canada"? Similar to how adults teach children to say the "magic" word please, the imperative to take the oath functions as a pedagogy of citizenship—that is, a relational, hierarchical, and intentional move to set up a relationship of social and political belonging within a polity. As Donald argues, what he calls "fort logics" have always spatially separated white civilized settlers from the uncivilized "Indians." Materially and symbolically, the nation is a fort: inside the nation is a place of belonging and safety, and outside the nation is a place of danger and Otherness. Bringing together the act of taking the oath to the queen as a pedagogy of citizenship, then, and understanding the nation as a fort, we can identify a grammar of gate-keeping that conditions entry into citizenship for immigrants in terms of their spatial relationship to nation. To come into the fort, you need to say the "magic" words:

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I swear (or affirm)
That I will be faithful
And bear true allegiance
To Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second
Queen of Canada<sup>62</sup>
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Under a facade of "including" immigrants, the nation-state can open its gates to those who aspire passage into the civilized fort of the nation—and the act of taking the oath sediments subscription to this white settler capitalist colonial order, a relationship to the nation that only recognizes "Muslims" as neoliberal multicultural subjects. The act of taking the oath reproduces what Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernandez describe as settler futurity, a "settler colonial curricular project of replacement . . . anything that seeks to

recuperate and not interrupt settler colonialism, to reform the settlement and incorporate Indigenous peoples into the multicultural settler colonial nation state."63 With fort logics operating as pedagogy, the fort functions "as a socio-spatial organizer of peoples and cultures that delimits *and* explains difference as irreconcilable."64 As Khan's social eviction suggests, the racialized terms of citizenship that require perpetual exaltation from the immigrant towards the settler for being allowed to come into the fort of the nation do not dissolve with subsequent generations. Khan's defiant refusal of colonial socio-spatial relations with Indigenous people exposes how the belonging of those racialized as Muslim hangs by the thread of their exalting settler futurity.

Furthermore, the queen as symbol of Canada functions to imprint spaces with a haunting "consciousness of the place" as a settler colony. $\underline{^{65}}$ In the oath, and elsewhere in government-sponsored Canadian culture, the queen creates an ideological interpellative effect. Through an embodied absence and disembodied presence, her image works as a technology that makes us impute a presence despite her absence. 66 She is everywhere and nowhere, branded onto the stuff of our lives, peering at us from schools and government buildings, the money in our pockets, our passports that stamp us with a vestige of her aura and therefore mobility. This powerful haunting is repeated throughout symbols that the study guide educates us in: the Canadian Crown; the Mace of the House of Commons; the Coat of Arms containing symbols of England, France, Scotland, and Ireland; the Gothic revival style that the Parliament buildings were built in; and the Royal Anthem God Save the Queen. 67 Only for the exalted white colonial subject do statements in Discover Canada, such as "Most Canadians were proud to be part of the British Empire" or the oxymoron, "Her Majesty is a symbol of Canadian sovereignty," make sense. 68 For the exalted white colonial subject, the colonial order is freedom and independence because it was created for them and they continue to materially and symbolically benefit from these inequitable power relations. At stake in the symbol of the queen are settler futurities, recuperating settler colonialism on Indigenous Land as part of the multicultural settler colonial nation state. 69 As the pointed attacks on Khan illustrate, racialized multicultural neoliberal subjects cannot be permitted to defy these settler futurities.

Reading Discover Canada Contrapuntally

Tracing how citizenship as a technology of settlement knots together colonization and racialization in intricate flows of power requires a nuanced spatial analysis to understand how the logic of racial capitalism structures social relations with Land/land and nation. Henri Lefebvre's theory of the moments of social space provides a useful framework. $\frac{70}{2}$ It begins with the premise that a triad of social processes imbricate space with power relations: representations of space (or spatial planning), representational space (or spatial imaginaries), and spatial practices (or spatial norms). Spatial norms are both produced by and shape the parameters set by spatial imaginaries and spatial planning. 71 These three moments of social space allow us to deconstruct how the citizenship study guide spatially reproduces settler futurities. However, while Lefebvre's focus on the social construction of space allows for a layered unpacking of power relations, it also constrains the analysis of how citizenship processes spatially efface Indigeneity as modalities of settlement and racial governance, focusing as it does on capitalist relations of social space. Edward Said's method of contrapuntal reading adds another dimension to our reading of space for the effaced colonized presence that makes the visiblized colonizing presence possible and deepens a socio-spatial reading of the study guide to foreground Indigeneity rather than settler colonialism. 72 Thus I will be contrapuntally reading *Discover Canada* through Lefevbre's three layers of social space to search for the effaced Indigenous spatializations on which the exalted settlement spatializations are built and sustained. Employing a contrapuntal reading of the guide presents an occasion to think productively about

Indigenous erasure and demonstrate openings to other ways of being on this Land. Examining *Discover Canada*'s spatial imaginaries and its narrative of Indigenous people, its spatial practices of resource extraction and tourism, and its representations of space in the politics of naming places, my reading establishes an ongoing dialogue with Indigenous thinkers to show how "Muslim" Canadians find themselves embroiled between very different onto-epistemologies of Land and nation.

Spatial Imaginaries: Cartesian Modernity or Land as Pedagogy

The spatial imaginary of land is always described as a physical, geographic formation, ⁷³ and most often represented in the study guide as the site of colonization and battles for land sovereignty between the British and the French, who spent the eighteenth century fighting over land, which was won, lost, separated from the respective motherlands, and consolidated. In describing Indigenous people present prior to European colonization, the study guide frequently uses the passive voice, expunging the culpability of the settlers who purposely spread smallpox: "Large numbers of Aboriginals died of European diseases to which they lacked immunity." ⁷⁴ Throughout these stories, depiction of Indigenous people's relationship to Land is cursory. We are told that Indigenous people "lived off the land, some by hunting and gathering, others by raising crops" early on, before the settlers arrived. ⁷⁵



Figure 3: In contrast to the vibrant, large panel of John Cabot, an English cartographer, and the multitudes in support behind him, the panel depicting an Indian encampment is muted beiges and pale blue greens, the teepee is decrepit, the nameless "Indians" are threadbare and forlorn, *Discover Canada*, 14.

In the same breath that settlers are portrayed as more worthy of being in control of the land, the narrative simultaneously positions them as merely continuing what the Indigenous people were doing before, without any reference to an epistemological difference between capitalist Crown ownership of the land and Indigenous communal sovereignty over Land. Instead, the focus is on activity. Unlike the Aboriginal pre-modern savage predecessor, for whom "Warfare was common . . . as they competed for land, resources and prestige," the new European settler engages in modern capitalist activities of trapping, conquering, and mapping. Conquering and mapping characterize settlers as owners of the land, derived from a discourse that sees a capitalist relationship to land as "civilized" and "progress." The European settler thus becomes the civilizer and transmitter of progress, in touch with modernity and sovereign of the land he (always a he) lives on.

The European conqueror becomes the model for the Anglo-Canadian citizen, the people who rule and run government then and now, belying sophisticated Indigenous forms of governance. What is evoked here is not a static representation of the past—it is very dynamic in what is retained, ignored and interpreted, and it indexes the present and its power relations. Thus, while Indigenous people are pre-modern and pre-capitalistic, settlers are portrayed as modern, capitalist subjects.

These descriptions fit into well-worn ways of describing supposed racial difference. Mohanram unpacks the racial construct behind the replacement of relation to land with relation to nation, which she sees as a binary spatialization of the bricoleur and engineer. The bricoleur relates naively and situationally to objects, while the engineer is guided by a plan and stands separate from the material. In the study guide, the Indigenous appear as local, pre-modern bricoleurs, working with the "science of the concrete" to survive, while the European explorers are engineers—universal subjects, modern, and working with the abstract to control the world. Mohanram analyses how a pre-capitalistic knowledge of the land entraps Indigenous people locally and casts them as bricoleurs, yet, simultaneously, modern knowledge of the land by settlers is connected to Cartesian knowledge and therefore seen as universal and superior.



Figure 4: The queen's crown jewels decorate the Inuit boy's cap. Discover Canada, 51.

Even when the study guide seemingly praises Indigenous people, and even their knowledge of the land, it simultaneously asserts a relationship to nation, and puts this knowledge in service of the colonial nation to assert its sovereignty and assure its security. Describing the Canadian military's arctic force, the guide tells us, "Drawing on indigenous knowledge and experience, the Rangers travel by snowmobile in the winter and all-terrain vehicles in the summer from Resolute to the Magnetic North Pole, and keep the flag flying in Canada's Arctic." In the same breath that the study guide grants knowledge creating expertise to the Inuit, it casts them as pre-modern bricoleurs, their Indigenous knowledge seamlessly servicing the modern colonial nation. (The queen even makes a symbolic appearance here, her state crown emblazoned over the cap of an Inuit boy shooting in Nunavut [Figure 4], a reminder of the queen's embodied absence and disembodied presence.)

If we bring a contrapuntal reading and restore an invisibilized Indigenous understanding of the spatial imaginary to these narratives of Canada, Anishinaabe scholar Leanne Simpson's narrative of spatial imaginaries relating to Land is a good example. Standing in contrast to the study guide's seamless fitting together of different imaginaries in relating to nation, Simpson demonstrates instead a sharply jagged incommensurability through the story of a little girl, Kwezens in Anishnaabemowin, who learns to make maple sugar in the sugar bush through watching a squirrel one spring day. Simpson describes the

relationships Kwezens is embedded in that make her knowledge generation possible. These include her mother, her grandmother, her Aunties, and a whole group of Ojibwe women. Simpson describes Kwezens's knowledge of and confidence in herself, as well as the human, not human, and spiritual relationships around her that make knowledge creation possible. It is a story of strength and knowledge wisdom based on Land as pedagogy and methodology. Central to Simpson's argument is that stories of Land are not pre-contact stories, though they may seem so because they must be pursued outside of capitalist systems, and are forms of meaning-making that cannot be extracted from the systems of relationality in which they were made, systems that always highlight Land as pedagogy. 81 For Simpson, it is important to situate this story as happening in the here and now, despite settler colonialism, despite missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and despite the notion that Indigenous people are eradicated, destitute, and damaged. Simpson stresses how settler colonial relations are incommensurable with Indigenous relations with Land. 82 In other words, like night and day, Simpson's spatial imaginary of relating to Land—an Indigenous futurity—and the study guide's relationship to the settler nation—a settler futurity—cannot exist at the same time, a tension that remains unresolved for non-Indigenous, non-white Canadians. To become a Canadian citizen, immigrants have to subscribe to the stories settler colonists believe about themselves and those they Other, stories that spatially interpellate racial relations.

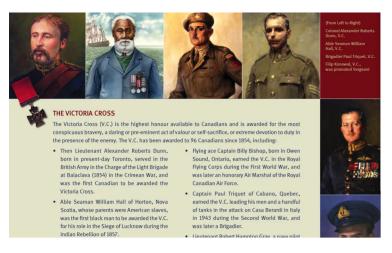


Figure 5: The Victoria Cross appears on page 41 as part of Canadian Symbols.

For example, a panel on the Victoria Cross (V.C.), the highest award the nation rewards for bravery, informs us that the first Black man to receive the Cross was "Able Seaman William Hall of Horton, Nova Scotia, whose parents were American slaves." Hall was awarded the V.C. for "his role in the Siege of Lucknow during the Indian Rebellion of 1857." Specifically, Hall's role as part of the Canadian naval forces supporting the British was to engage in the fusillading of the Shah Najeef mosque against Hindu and Muslim sepoys during their mutiny in the First War of Independence. By pitting Black Canadians against Brown subjects of the British empire, the war machine of racial capitalism structures social relations such that Seaman was able to achieve Canada's highest honor by participating in its brutal imperial wars, demonstrating how racial capitalism plays off racialized groups against each other for aspirational whiteness.

Spatial Practices and Norms: Mining and Recreation or lethi'nihsténha Ohwentsia'kékha

In the study guide, the activities involving land that receive the most attention are resource extraction and tourism. Canada's provinces are described largely in mining and

extraction terms, chiefly with respect to oil and gas extraction, but also precious metals. The Yukon, for example, is described this way:

Thousands of miners came to the Yukon during the Gold Rush of the 1890s, as celebrated in the poetry of Robert W. Service. Mining remains a significant part of the economy. The White Pass and Yukon Railway opened from Skagway in neighboring Alaska to the territorial capital, Whitehorse, in 1900 and provides a spectacular tourist excursion across precipitous passes and bridges. Yukon holds the record for the coldest temperature ever recorded in Canada (-63°C).84



Figure 6: The Yukon panel. The panel characterizes William Logan as a first-generation "immigrant" rather than a settler. There is no mention of any Indigenous presence or the Champagne and Aishihik and Kluane First Nations on whose territory Mount Logan lies. This is the only discussion of the Yukon in the guide. *Discover Canada*, 50.

First, the study guide highlights mining as the primary spatial practice in the Yukon. This portrays an extraction of resources from the land, and belies knowledge of Land beyond a physical, geographical place, useful as a factor of production. Mining from the land is "celebrated" in Canadian culture, as shown by Service's poetry. This representation of space expunges consequences of mining such as land degradation and pollution.

Second, tourism is a normalized spatial practice on land available for Canadians' recreational pleasure. The land here is a wilderness with no apparent population besides "some [who] continue to earn a living by hunting, fishing and trapping."85 Discursively cast as bricoleur and pre-moderns, not worthy of informing us of the Aishihik and Kluane First Nations presence, the study guide continues a pattern of generalized reference to Indigenous relationship to Land in language that casts it as not serious. Rather, a settler colonial relationship to land as central to Canadian identity is supported across the narrative, and consolidated through the photographs, which also tell a land story of ownership, recreation, and mining development, ready for settler use. 86 It is a relationship to land that the queen makes a constant appearance in, through the claiming of these ownership and extraction rights for the "Crown." The recreational photographs offer a socio-spatial construction of Canada as *terra nullius*, or vacant land, ready to be populated by settlers and immigrants, evaporating Indigenous dispossession and land claims. 87

Contrapuntally bringing Indigenous spatial practices with Land side by side with these settler colonial capitalist practices on land will help decipher the palimpsest of the study guide. Spatial practices and how they are shaped by colonial capitalism play a key role in Dene scholar Glen Coulthard's analysis of Indigenous sovereignty and colonial

recognition. 88 Analyzing the struggles over land between the Dene and the state through outright expropriation and land claim negotiations, Coulthard argues that the structured dispossession of Indigenous rights is not just about physical ownership of the land, but an onto-epistemological difference of seeing Land. He reminds us, "Indigenous struggles against capitalist imperialism are best understood as struggles oriented around the questions and meaning of *land*," where land is seen as a bundle of meanings distinct from economic development: "land as resource, central to our material survival; land as identity, as constitutive of who we are as a people, and land as relationship." During negotiations for land claims with the state, colonial recognition paved the way for the state to disregard Indigenous ways of relating to land: "The state insisted that any institutionalized accommodation of Indigenous cultural differences be reconcilable with *one* political formation—namely colonial sovereignty—and *one* mode of production—namely capitalism." Colonial capitalism restructures relations to Land to subsume them in service of relations to the settler colonial capitalist nation.

The study guide's erasure of the central tension in Canadian spatial practices and norms between Land as relationship and land for economic capitalist development normalizes spatial practices of relating to land in ways that underpin market economies. Bringing immigrants in to the space of Canada is an ongoing project dispossessing Indigenous people. Relationality and interdependence in using resources the Land provides would cast resource extraction as less inevitable. But this would require the study guide to consider very different relations to the physical formation land than as the exploitable object of extraction and tourism. That is, it would need to consider seriously Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies of Land and belonging.

A sense of the Indigenous, effaced approaches can be found in the way Mohawk scholar Sandra Styres elaborates on Indigenous relationships with Land: "lethi'nihsténha Ohwentsia'kékha is a Kanien'keha (Mohawk) word meaning 'our Mother the Earth.' It refers to the ways we honor and respect her as a sentient and conscious being." 91 Furthermore,

Living in a deeply sacred and intimate relationship to Land requires respectful *knowledge* of whose traditional lands one is on, a *commitment* to seeking out and coming to an *understanding* of the stories and knowledge embedded in those lands, a conscious *choosing* to live in intimate, sacred and storied relationships with those lands, not the least of which is an acknowledgement of the way one is implicated in and informed by the networks and relations of power that compose the tangled colonial history of the lands. 92

Styres stresses that this approach to Land is not meant to be a "romanticized utopia or empty generality." Pather, it highlights how Land is central to an Indigenous worldview: "Land is our primary relationship—it is first, before all else." She is highlighting four practices here: learning, committing, understanding, and choosing. These practices are not settler futurities. Rather, they establish Indigenous futurities—they repatriate and rematriate Indigenous ways of living and relations with Land. Yet to become Canadian citizens, immigrants are compelled to continue the practices settlers enact on land. How are prospective citizens studying *Discover Canada* to reconcile extraction and recreation (and their concomitant disputes, such as the Trans-Canada pipeline, the mercury poisoning of communities at Grassy Narrows, or the Oka crisis) to these four practices? The spatial practices that are conditions for potential citizens entry into the fort of the nation are white settler capitalist relationships that subsume land to nation, settler futurities that are incommensurable with a relationship to Land as Indigenous scholars describe it.

Spatial Planning: Colonial Naming as Claiming Indigenous Land

Consistent with the spatial imaginaries and spatial practices previously outlined, spatial planning or the naming of places continues to shape how the study guide conceptualizes sovereignty over land or landmarks, which seem to be only worthy of mention in the study guide if named by the British or French. Colonial naming of places in Canada is prevalent throughout the guide: New Founded Land, named by John Cabot in 1497; the province of Alberta and Lake Louise, named after "Princess Louise Caroline Alberta, fourth daughter of Queen Victoria"; or Mount Logan, "named in honor of Sir William Logan... born in Montreal in 1798 to Scottish immigrant parents." Nowhere are we informed of the Indigenous meanings behind any place in Canada save for the word Canada itself (a European rendering of the Iroquoian word for "village," learned from two captured guides), and Iqaluit. The Eurocentric explanations of names demonstrate that places are worthy of mention only insofar as they are acknowledged by settlers to be so. Through these namings, and their framing in *Discover Canada*, the study guide establishes a normative recognition that colonial sovereignty is natural for Canada.

One example is particularly striking in its explicit articulation of all three Lefebvre's components of social space—how we are informed about the naming of Iqaluit. We are told that the current capital of Nunavut is "Iqaluit, formerly Frobisher Bay, named after the English explorer Martin Frobisher, who penetrated the uncharted Arctic for Queen Elizabeth in 1576." What the relevance of knowing the obsolete name for a Canadian city (which changed in 1987) is for immigrants is difficult to fathom beyond its once again reinforcing the stamp of settler colonialism on the Canadian landscape.



Figure 7: The Nunavut panel. Discover Canada, 51.

A more relevant definition would be to discuss what "Iqaluit" means, but the study guide only briefly informs us about this, preferring instead to focus on the story of the expired name. Such a precedence of the colonial "naming" of places that makes them exist in the real world suggests that these are more important for immigrants to know. The early colonists "discovered" the land, and their proof is in the act of naming it. The "place of many fish," which is what Iqaluit actually means in Inuktitut, would promote a more contextualized understanding of Land. Furthermore, the sexual violence implied by the verb "penetrated," calls forth a trope of metaphors about virgins, untouched empty land, and the act of penetration that claims it through being the first to touch and deflower. Recall Mohanram's metonymic link between body, landscape, and nation. Here, woman as virgin and land as terra nullius are metonymic equivalents, and the spatial construction of land as virgin works to create an imaginary of land as void of Indigenous people. Penetrating the Arctic, a symbolic virginal deflowering, functions as an assertion of Anglo settler colonial power and authority. Since Europeans are conceived as always already modern, replacing Aboriginals, the penetration of the Arctic remains part and parcel of a settler colonial discourse that defines the penetration and conquering of virgin lands as inevitable progress. Describing how Israeli national memories of Palestine mirror desires of the Israeli psyche to establish dominance, Joseph Massad draws on Freud to unpack how childhood memories and their meanings are not remembered as they happened;

rather, they are remembered through desires of the present. The reconstructed memory, Massad argues, is a mirror of the nation in that it reflects what the nation sees about itself in the present. It is possible to understand the study guide's narration of Frobisher's expedition to penetrate the Arctic as reflective of a desire to penetrate and establish ownership. When the study guide metonymically invokes land for woman, its assertion of colonial power over land is an assertion of control over that land's identity, where land, penetration of land, and penetration of virginity can be read as sexual metaphors for power and control. Thus, the place is named through a colonial lens, the imaginary is shaped to take ownership of that which is virgin, and the normative practice is to establish dominance over virginial land.

Unpacking the three layers of the social construction of space in *Discover Canada* contrapuntally, this analysis affirms that Indigenous relations to Land are incommensurable with colonial relations to nation and how a relationship to nation produces a capitalist Cartesian subject, while a pre-civilization, pre-modern subject is the fate of those who relate to Land. The study guide narrates a spatial imaginary of Indigenous people as relics of the past and their primitive stories as irrelevant, in contrast to Simpson's stories of Kwezens and the maple sugar, stories that evidence an Indigenous relationality to Land that is firmly in the present. Coulthard's analysis demonstrates how onto-epistemologies underpinning spatial practices structure Indigenous dispossession displacing Indigenous onto-epistemologies of Land or, as Styres names it, lethi'nihsténha Ohwentsia'kékha. ⁹⁹ The Freudian slip in the discussion of renaming Iqaluit reveals colonial naming and dominance as more worthy.

In each layer of spatial imaginaries, practices, and naming, a contrapuntal reading of the study guide reveals how the socio-spatial relationships of Land and nation are positioned as mutually exclusive by white settler colonial racial capitalism. Coming into the fort of the nation is contingent on swearing allegiance to colonial relationships to land and nation based on racial capitalism. In bringing in racialized Others to the nation as neoliberal multicultural subjects, this spatialization reproduces settler futurities for the racial project of the state, creating its own antibodies against Indigenous socio-spatial relations.

"Muslim" Relationship to Nation, Relationship to Land

In advocating for the Canada 150 celebrations at Dalhousie to be recognized as a celebration of Indigenous genocide rather than a celebration of the state's confederation, Masuma Khan snubbed socio-spatial relations espoused by the Canadian state. On all three levels of Lefevbre's social space, Khan did her own contrapuntal reading of her belonging here and swapped out settler colonial capitalist relations with nation to enact Indigenous relations with Land. She disregarded the colonial imaginary of the Indigenous person as a simple bricoleur with no significant presence in Canada. Khan's spatial practices enacted Styres' injunctions of honoring lethi'nihsténha Ohwentsia'kékha: respectful knowledge that prioritized an Indigenous relationship to Land by learning the Indigenous history of the Land she was on, committing to honor that Land, and acknowledging the way in which she was implicated in colonial history. She disregarded colonial naming of the 150th anniversary of Confederation and saw it as an anniversary of genocide, not cause for celebration. She scorned all the spatial relations laid out in Discover Canada. In doing so, Khan's move can be seen as decolonizing her belonging to this Land. Nation demands we subsume, erase, and ignore the "storied relationships" with Land, "the way one is implicated in and informed by the networks and relations of power that compose the tangled history of the lands" and exalt the stories of the settler state. 100 Instead, Khan related to Land in ways that superseded and negated the colonial ordering structure. Recall the three injunctions framing the attacks on Khan when she prioritized the sacredness of Land and her solidarity with Indigenous people over white tears: go

back to where she came from, be grateful to the country that welcomed her parents, and assimilate to Canada's heritage and tolerant multiculturalism. She did not explain herself to colonial whiteness as the arbiter of relations on Turtle Island nor subsume her belonging on this Land to colonization and a racialized hierarchy. By decolonizing her belonging, she broke out of the structural positions settler colonialism makes available to racialized people. In refusing to exalt the white subject and its stories of itself, she found herself being socially evicted from the nation and subject to a months-long institutional attempt by her university to police her.

Khan's act was diametrically opposed to the way the study guide explicitly warns those racialized as Muslim as to who is sovereign in Canada. In a panel entitled "The Equality of Women and Men," the study guide informs prospective citizens that "barbaric cultural practices that tolerate spousal abuse, 'honor killings,' female genital mutilation, forced marriage or other gender based violence" are criminal and "severely punished." This unsavory text is accompanied with photos of people, including, noticeably, the only photo of a hijabi woman in the guide, demonstrating all the workings of an orientalist logic.



Figure 8: "The Equality of Women and Men" appears at the top of the page that also describes "Citizenship Responsibilities" and "Defending Canada." *Discover Canada*, 9.

Exemplifying a trio of racist orientalist tropes that Razack identifies as the oppressed Muslim woman, the oppressive Muslim man (and assumed aggressor in such crimes), and noble white saviors, this panel builds on the assumption that misogyny and patriarchy are specifically Muslim cultural/religious problems positing Western civilization against the Other. 102 Beside the fact that such incriminations do not appear elsewhere in the study guide, what is revealing is how the study guide explicitly incarcerates a Muslim cultural essence outside of a constructed "open" and "generous" Canada. In spite of five other people depicted in the photographs accompanying the box, it is unmistakable that the message is targeted to those for whom the charges of barbaric cultural practices stick—in this case, the Muslim woman learning from the white woman by her side. This panel's implication of guilt by being Muslim relies on tropes of Muslims as perpetually foreign to Canada. As "Muslims" whose cultural essence is pathologized by the logic of racial capitalism and suspect in the nation, they are evicted and cast out on the basis of a moral geography that places them not here but over there, where female genital mutilation is routine and accepted. Their belonging to Canada can potentially be severed on the flimsiest of suspicions, on incredible pretexts, on having to prove over and over—as did the Canadian minister of immigration, himself originally a Somali refugee—that he does not subscribe to female genital mutilation, when the Conservatives challenged the Liberal government's attempt to remove this panel from the guide.

Conclusion

White supremacy's double moves shine through in *Discover Canada* and the oath, demonstrating how the state conditions racialization and colonization simultaneously in the socio-spatial relations immigrants are expected to have and carry forward in their lives as Canadians. Through a contrapuntal reading of the study guide, this paper has made visible incommensurable sets of socio-spatial relations to Land and nation those racialized as Muslims in Canada have to contend with, relations that make "Muslim" belonging in Canada contingent, relations that are shaped by white settler capitalist colonialism. Through complex alibis of racialized settlement, the state spatializes a white settler capitalist colonial relationship—a settler futurity—to the nation as a condition for coming into its fort, making those racialized as Muslims contingently present on Turtle Island. They must either exalt whiteness—even as it superficially purports to reconcile its relationship with Indigeneity—or risk being evicted. They must exalt the stories colonial whiteness tells of itself to define itself, uphold the practices whiteness espouses in relating to land and nation, and recognize the primacy of colonial naming practices, all of which are clear socio-spatial matrices of power relations. The second layer of this exaltation is that those racialized as Muslims are coerced to accept the denigrated structural positions this racialized arrangement configures and its inter-racial relations. That is, they must relate to Indigenous people as premodern bricoleurs, not as rightful owners of this Land, and racially benefit from distancing themselves from political Blackness.

The citizenship oath and *Discover Canada* serve racialized pedagogical functions for new immigrants, a manifesto for their expected racial-spatial relationship to Canada—a relationship that cannot sit side by side with an Indigenous relationship to Land, nor can the two be understood in terms of each other. Khan's move was a decolonizing act, deriding whiteness as the arbiter of socio-spatial relations. In one fell swoop, she cut through the Gordian knot, decolonizing and de-racializing her belonging in terms outside of either orientalism or settler colonialism. Furthermore, by refusing to relate to nation, she revealed the liberal democracy for what it was—a settler colony.

My analysis may seem obvious: like mercenaries, those racialized as Muslim are useful to the settler state and nation insofar as they subscribe to racial capitalism and exalt the dominant order by playing the part of the neoliberal multicultural subject. Once they reject settler colonialism and align themselves to Indigenous struggles around Land, the basis of their belonging no longer exists and they can be evicted. Yet discussions of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations rarely pay attention to the material costs racialized people with varying degrees of white privilege must confront. As a mother, this state of contingency, its threat of eviction in any form, and the very material costs involved are not something I can brush away lightly—and in my broader research I see how they shape "Muslim" youth's subjectivity and conditions of possibility. There is a parallel move the state and dominant discourse make when Canada's latest trend of Indigenous reconciliation, land acknowledgments, and settler confessions are used as alibis to marginalize immigrant voices that challenge the notion of Canada as a benevolent nation, just as multiculturalism was not so long ago used to marginalize Indigenous voices. 103 Whiteness morphs and twists and slides through any challenge to emerge at the top of the racialized hierarchy in what Said aptly names a "flexible positional superiority." 104

As case in point, a new study guide and citizenship oath have been in the works since 2017. News of updates to the process continues to come in: the oath will now include treaty obligations as well as an oath to the queen; the study guide will contain sections on "sad chapters" in Canadian history such as residential schools and its reconciliation process underway in Canada; and it "delves extensively" into the history of Indigenous people. 105 Yet, as I have demonstrated, *Discover Canada* and the oath remain derivative

of the ways the citizenship process conditions immigrants' acceptance on socio-spatial relations that are antithetical to Indigenous relations to Land. Khan's story demonstrates how those racialized as Muslim are caught in the middle of this incommensurability. Unless the spatial logic of settler colonialism is addressed, even new iterations of the study guide and the oath that describe Indigenous people more fairly will camouflage the pedagogical production of colonial, racialized subject positions and their commensurate relations. Until then, developments such as a new study guide and citizenship oath must be read as attempted window dressing for a benevolent, reflexive Canadian state, and an attempt to accomplish what was previously done explicitly under new guises.

Coda

Early on in this essay I asked, how do I teach my children a "Good Way" of belonging on this Land that will also not harm them? What is the web of relationships I am part of, even if I cannot immediately see them? I conclude this essay by drawing on Indigenous testimony that provides a partial answer. Philip Blake, a Dene leader from Fort McPherson, testified in what became known as the Berger Inquiry in 1974 opposing government development of Indigenous Land for oil exploration and extraction. I situate Blake's testimony describing Indigenous onto-epistemologies of living on and sharing this Land as a manifesto for non-Indigenous people to center Land in our relations of belonging:

If our Indian nation is being destroyed so that poor people of the world might get a chance to share this worlds [sic] riches, then as Indian people, I am sure that we would seriously consider giving up our resources. But do you really expect us to give up our life and our lands so that those few people who are the richest and most powerful in the world today can maintain their own position of privilege?

That is not our way.

I strongly believe that we do have something to offer your nation, however, something other than our minerals. I believe it is in the self-interest of your own nation to allow the Indian nation to survive and develop in our own way, on our own land. For thousands of years we have lived with the land, we have taken care of the land, and the land has taken care of us. We did not believe that our society has to grow and expand and conquer new areas in order to fulfill our destiny as Indian people. We have lived with the land, not tried to conquer or control it or rob it of its riches. We have not tried to get more and more riches and power, we have not tried to conquer new frontiers, or out do our parents or make sure that every year we are richer than the year before. We have been satisfied to see our wealth as ourselves and the land we live with.

It is our greatest wish to be able to pass on this land to succeeding generations in the same condition that our fathers have given it to us. We did not try to improve the land and we did not try to destroy it. That is not our way. I believe your nation might wish to see us, not as a relic from the past, but as a way of life, a system of values by which you may survive in the future. This we are willing to share. $\frac{106}{100}$

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Notes

- 1. For the Dalhousie Student Union rationale, see the poster on their Facebook post.

 Dalhousie Student Union, "Unlearn 150," July 1, 2017,

 https://www.facebook.com/dalstudentunion/photos/a.10150273188821618/10154335655046618/.
- 2. Emma Davie, "Dalhousie Student Faces Disciplinary Action over Canada 150 post," *CBC News*, October 20, 2017, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/novascotia/masuma-khan-dalhousie-student-disciplinary-action-facebook-post-1.4364586.
- 3. Brett Bundale, "Dalhousie Student Faces Backlash for Criticizing 'White Fragility' of Canada 150: 'Act of Ongoing Colonialism," *National Post*, October 20, 2017, http://nationalpost.com/news/canada/dalhousie-student-leader-faces-backlash-for-criticizing-white-fragility.
- 4. Anjuli Patil, "Dalhousie Withdraws Disciplinary Action against Masuma Khan over 'White Fragility' Facebook Post," CBC News, October 25, 2017, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/dalhousie-withdraws-complaint-against-masuma-khan-1.4371332.
- 5. This perception is apparent in how the earliest Canadian Muslims are erased from the Canadian national story, along with Black history in general, through Canada's disavowal of its own past with slavery, as well as in public resistance to acknowledging the first Canadian mosque as a part of real Canadian history, and a Quebec township denying a permit for a Muslim cemeteries only months after a white supremacist perpetrated mass shooting at their mosque. See Karim H. Karim, "Crescent Dawn in the Great White North: Muslim Participation in the Canadian Public Sphere," in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 262–277; Ingrid Peritz, "Quebec Town Rejects Plan to Build Muslim Cemetery in Narrow Vote," *Globe and Mail*, July 16, 2017, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/quebec-town-rejects-plan-to-build-muslim-cemetery-in-narrow-vote/article35704826/; Rinaldo Walcott, "Black Queer and Black Trans: Imagine, Imagination, Imaginary Futures," *Equity Matters*, October 27, 2011, https://www.ideas-idees.ca/blog/ black-queer-and-black-trans-imagine-imagination-imaginary-futures.
- 6. Muslims are often seen as a homogenous mass of undifferentiated Brown recent arrivals to Canada, through colonial state-imposed categories that flatten the diversity of Muslims and "Brown" people. This flattening erases Black Muslims, supporting and strengthening the anti-Blackness in Muslim communities on Turtle Island. It is a challenge in writing about anti-Muslim racism to work against the relational production of subject positions and subjectivities while not losing sight of the fact that multiplicities of Muslim experiences do not always have shared features. Furthermore, the first victim in the aftermath of 9/11 was a Sikh man, Balbir Singh Sodhi, read as Muslim by his attackers, and the first place of worship desecrated post-9/11 was also Sikh, the Gobind Sadan in Palermo, New York, read as Muslim by the attackers. Non-Muslim Arabs such as Coptic Christians may also be identified "Muslim," which is ironic given how they are often fleeing from state discrimination in Muslim-majority countries based on their non-Muslim status.

For Delise Mugabo, the lack of attention to Black Muslim Islamophobia stems from how "the Muslim subject is not specified as Arab or South Asian but is nevertheless treated in a universalistic manner that forecloses any potential attention to the subject's racialization as Black." I use the term "those racialized as Muslims" and put "Muslims" in quotation marks to describe those who face the racializing logics of dominance regardless of people's actual religion, through readings that are often situational. I draw on Masuma Khan's experience as a guiding example to be specific and not fall "into the trap of universalizing the racializing tendencies of Islamophobia." Délice Mugabo, "On Rocks and Hard Places: A Reflection on Antiblackness in Organizing against Islamophobia," *Critical Ethnic Studies* 2, no. 2 (2016): 165.

- 7. Sandra Styres and Dawn Zinga distinguish between land and Land thus: "For us, land (the more general term) refers to landscapes as a fixed geographical and physical space that includes earth, rocks, and waterways; whereas, "Land" (the proper name) extends beyond a material fixed space. Land is a spiritually infused place grounded in interconnected and interdependent relationships, cultural positioning, and is highly contextualized." Throughout, I use land (small I) when referring to the physical geographic formation and Land (capitalized L) when referring to Indigenous understandings of contextualized Land. See Sandra Styres and Dawn Zinga, "The Community-First Land-Centred Theoretical Framework: Bringing a' Good Mind' to Indigenous Education Research?" *Canadian Journal of Education* 36, no. 2 (2013): 300–301.
- 8. Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 35. 2
- 9. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, UK: Verso, 2006), 6−7.

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- 10. Sherene Razack, *Casting Out: The Eviction of Muslims From Western Law & Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 8−16.

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- 11. Lucy El-Sherif and Mark Sinke, "'One Message, All the Time and in Every Way': Spatial Subjectivities and Pedagogies of Citizenship," *Curriculum Inquiry* 48, no. 1 (2018): 43–44.
- 12. See, for example, Rita Dhamoon, "A Feminist Approach to Decolonizing Anti-Racism: Rethinking Transnationalism, Intersectionality, and Settler Colonialism," *Feral Feminisms* 4 (2015): 20–37; Beenash Jafri, "Ongoing Colonial Violence in Settler States," *Lateral* 6, no. 1 (2017), https://csalateral.org/issue/6-1/forum-alt-humanities-settler-colonialism-ongoing-violence-jafri/; Shaista Patel, Ghaida Moussa, and Nishant Upadhyay, "Complicities, Connections, and Struggles: Critical Transnational Feminist Analysis of Settler Colonialism," *Feral Feminisms* 4 (Summer 2015); Harsha Walia, *Undoing Border Imperialism* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2013).

Turtle Island is the name given to the continent commonly known as North American by Anishinaabe, Lenape, and other Indigenous tribes of the United States and Canada.

13. In an interview, Tiffany Lethabo King says, "I think that non-Black racialized students also need to attend to the historical specificity of the ways that their own relationship with Native peoples, the land, and white settlers has been and continues to be structured. 'Settler' may not always be the best term to do this complicated and important intellectual and political work." Tiffany Lethabo King, "Interview with Tiffany Lethabo King," *Feral Feminisms* 4 (2015): 64–68, https://feralfeminisms.com/lethabo-king/. See also King's incisive critique on the use of settlement, settlers, and land as euphemisms that evade the ongoing violence

inflicted by white supremacy on Indigenous and Black bodies, and her injunction to use instead terms that center the intersectional violence. See Tiffany Lethabo King, *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019).

- 14. "Settlement is an assemblage of technologies and processes of makings and unmakings. Its processes require the making and unmaking of bodies, subject positions, space, place and claims of various forms of autonomy, self-actualization and transcendence." Tiffany Lethabo King, "In the Clearing: Black Female Bodies, Space and Settler Colonial Landscapes" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2013): 91–92.
- 15. J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, "'A Structure, Not an Event': Settler Colonialism and Enduring Indigeneity," *Lateral* 5, no. 1 (2016), https://csalateral.org/issue/5-1/forum-alt-humanities-settler-colonialism-enduring-indigeneity-kauanui/.
- 16. Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), xxiii-xxiv.
- 17. El-Sherif and Sinke, "One Message," 43–44.
- 18. Sunera Thobani, *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 2007), 73–77.
- 19. In this I follow Kauanui, "A Structure, Not an Event." lacktriangle
- 20. See Beenash Jafri, "Privilege vs. Complicity: People of Colour and Settler Colonialism," *Equity Matters*, March 21, 2012, https://www.ideasidees.ca/blog/privilege-vs-complicity-people-colour-and-settler-colonialism, as well as Jafri, "Ongoing Colonial Violence."
- 21. A "Good Way" in traditional Anishnaabek teachings can be described as honoring the spiritual relationship to the Creator as set forth by tobacco ties—both the squares of cloth with tobacco inside tied with ribbon offered to Elders, and the relational accountability honoring tobacco calls forth. In a wider sense, it also refers to ethical research with Indigenous communities. In this paper I am thinking about an ethical relationship living on this land as a Muslimah racialized as Muslim. See Debby Danard Wilson and Jean-Paul Restoule, "Tobacco Ties: The Relationship of the Sacred to Research," Canadian Journal of Native Education 33, no. 1 (2010): 29, and Shawn Wilson, Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods (Black Point, NS: Fernwood, 2008), 71–77.
- 22. Wilson, Research is Ceremony, 75–76.
- 23. Eve Tuck and Rubén A. Gaztambide-Fernández, "Curriculum, Replacement, and Settler Futurity," *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* 29, no. 1 (2013): 80.
- 24. Dwayne Donald, "Forts, Colonial Frontier Logics, and Aboriginal–Canadian Relations: Imagining Decolonizing Educational Philosophies in Canadian Contexts," in *Decolonizing Philosophies of Education*, ed. Ali A. Abdi (Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2012), 100.
- 25. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden, UK: Blackwell, 1974; 1991).
- 26. Edward W. Said, Culture and Imperialism (London, UK: Vintage, 1993), 51. 2
- 27. Adam Chapnick, "A 'Conservative' National Story? The Evolution of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's Discover Canada," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 41, no. 1 (2011): 20–36.
- 28. Chapnick, "'Conservative' National Story," 21–22.
- 29. Sherene Razack, "When Place Becomes Race," in *Race, Space and the Law*, ed. Sherene Razack (Toronto, ON: Between the Lines, 2002), 1–20.

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- 30. "Man Denied Canadian Citizenship Over Oath Mix-Up," *CBC News*, April 5, 2012, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/man-denied-canadian-citizenship-over-

31. "Prepare for the Citizenship Test and Interview," *Government of Canada: Become a Canadian Citizen*, accessed September 13, 2019, https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/canadian-

citizenship/become-canadian-citizen/citizenship-test.html.

- 32. Substantially, 7.54 million people identify as immigrants, of a total Canadian population of 34.5 million people, or, in other words, 21.9 percent of Canada's population are immigrants. See Statistics Canada, *Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity Highlight Tables* (November 1, 2017), accessed January 7, 2018, https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/hlt-fst/imm/Table.cfm?Lang=E&T=11&Geo=00.
- 33. Zunera Ishaq is a Muslim immigrant from Pakistan who challenged the probation on full face veils during citizenship ceremonies, and the Conservative government took her case to the Supreme Court of Canada. The Conservative party made her case a national flashpoint during the 2015 federal elections and after the Liberal party won, they dropped the government's case against Ishaq. Ishaq later penned an op-ed stating that she challenged the government because she wanted to live on her own terms. See Zunera Ishaq, "Why I Intend to Wear a Niqab at My Citizenship Ceremony," *Toronto Star*, March 16, 2015,
 - https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2015/03/16/why-i-intend-to-wear-a-niqab-at-my-citizenship-ceremony.html and Aaron Wherry, "The Niqab Election," *Maclean's*, September 25, 2015, https://www.macleans.ca/politics/the-niqab-election/.
- 34. El-Sherif and Sinke, "One Message," 43–46.
- 35. El-Sherif and Sinke, "One Message," 41. 🖸
- 36. Radhika Mohanram, *Black Body: Women, Colonialism, and Space* (Durhan, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 5.
- 38. This is Jodi Melamed's succinct phrase for Cedric Robinson's argument. Jodi Melamed, "Racial Capitalism," *Critical Ethnic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2015), 77. See Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1983; 2000).
- 39. In drawing on the logic of racial capitalism, I am not arguing in terms of economic relations, but rather how the logic of capitalist relations of production frame social relations.
- 40. Jodi Melamed, "The Spirit of Neoliberalism: From Racial Liberalism to Neoliberal Multiculturalism," *Social Text* 24, no. 4 (2006): 1–24.
- 41. Melamed, "Spirit of Neoliberalism," 16.
- 42. Melamed, "Racial Capitalism," 78–80. 2
- 43. Thobani, Exalted Subjects, 73–102.
- 44. Thobani, *Exalted Subjects*, 73–77.
- 45. Thobani, Exalted Subjects, 97. 2
- 46. George Lipsitz, *The Possessive investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 185–211.
- 47. Ghassan Hage, White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society (New York: Routledge, 2000), 60.
- 48. James H. Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power* (New York: Seabury, 1969), 151. Greg Burris draws together Lipsitz, Hage, and Cone's understandings of political

whiteness, political blackness, and subject positions to define political whiteness and political blackness vis a vis racialized people. See Greg Burris, *The Palestinian Idea: Film, Media and the Radical Imagination* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2019), 139-140.

- 49. It is important to reiterate that "Muslim" settlement does not begin in the moment of citizenship oath; it does not even begin when they first came to Canada. Because of and through European colonialism, settler colonialism, and imperialism, racial capitalism ordered and reordered spatial-racial relations beyond Europe in the contagion of European expansion beginning in the fifteenth century, including relations to land. Immigrants racialized as Muslims on Turtle Island bring their own racial-spatial ideas of this land, ideas that are frequently, as I have explained elsewhere, aspirationally white, anti-Black, settler colonial, and orientalist, even as they flee from the effects of these same systems of oppression. See Lucy El-Sherif, "Mirages in the Desert: Theorizing Western Muslim Identity across 60 Years," Curriculum Inquiry 46, no. 1 (2016): 27-44. Also, both Su'ad Abdul Khabeer's Muslim Cool: Race, Religion and Hip Hop in the United States (New York: New York University Press, 2016) and Zareena Grewal's Islam Is a Foreign Country: American Muslims and the Crisis of Global Authority (New York: New York University Press, 2014) are striking examples of recent scholarship that detail how immigrant Islam in the US has often disavowed Black Islam and aligned itself with aspirational whiteness through cultural production and religious authority, respectively.
- 50. Razack, *Casting Out*, 175. Razack does not particularize her use of the term Muslim, and so I use Muslim in its general sense when summarizing her work.
- 51. Razack, Casting Out, 5. 2
- 52. Omar El-Akkad, "Muslims Say CSIS Has Spies in Many Mosques," *Globe and Mail*, July 28, 2006, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/muslims-say-csis-has-spies-in-many-mosques/article1101289/.
- 53. Josie Kao, "Muslim Students' Association says Executives Receiving Surprise Visits from Law Enforcement," *Varsity*, November 12, 2018, https://thevarsity.ca/2018/11/12/muslim-students-association-says-executives-receiving-surprise-visits-from-law-enforcement/; Jack Hauen, "Muslim Students Speak Out About Being Targeted By Canadian Spy Agency," *Vice*, November 19, 2018, https://www.vice.com/en_ca/article/zmd4yj/muslim-students-speak-out-about-being-targeted-by-canadian-spy-agency.

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- 54. "To No Man's Land: The Story of Saeed Jama's Deportation to Somalia," CBC Radio One, *The Current*, November 4, 2014, https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/a-story-of-deportation-to-somalia-and-canada-s-voice-at-war-1.2907289/to-no-man-s-land-the-story-of-saeed-jama-s-deportation-to-somalia-1.2907291.
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58. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship* (Government of Canada, 2012), 2, https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/pub/discover.pdf.

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59. CIC, Discover Canada, 2. 🔁
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- 60. El-Sherif and Sinke, "One Message," 41. 2
- 61. Donald, "Forts," 100.
- 62. CIC, Discover Canada, 2. 2
- 63. Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernandez, "Curriculum," 80.
- 64. Donald, "Forts," 100.
- 65. Derek Hook, "Monumental Space and the Uncanny," *Geoforum* 36, no. 6(2005): 696.
- 66. Hook, "Monumental Space," 700.
- 67. CIC, Discover Canada, 38; 40.
- 68. CIC, Discover Canada, 21; 29.
- 69. Significantly, the federal government has proposed changing the oath of citizenship to incorporate both allegiance to the queen and a commitment to uphold Indigenous treaties, indicative of the moment that Canada is in right now: a desire to maintain Crown sovereignty and recognize Indigenous land rights. Identifying one's position as a settler is now a common academic practice in social science and humanities disciplines in Canada, and many public events and school boards now begin with a land acknowledgment at the start of the day. These land acknowledgments and other acts signify a recent shift in public discourse in Canada brought about by Indigenous activism, notwithstanding, Canada remains very much committed to settler colonialism and the settler state, spending half a billion dollars on the anniversary of confederation in what Khan and the Dalhousie Student Union accurately characterized as a celebration of Indigenous genocide.
- 70. Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 33. See also Eugene J. McCann, "Race, Protest, and Public Space: Contextualizing Lefebvre in the US City," *Antipode* 31, no. 2 (1999): 172.
- 71. McCann, Race, Protest, 172.
- 72. Said, Culture and Imperialism, 51.
- 73. Recall Zinga and Styres's distinction between land (as a physical formation) and Land (as a spiritually infused, interconnected, highly contextualized).
- 74. CIC. Discover Canada, 14. 2
- 75. CIC, Discover Canada, 14.
- 76. CIC, Discover Canada, 14. 🔁
- 77. Mohanram, Black Body, 7–11. 2
- 78. Mohanram, Black Body, 7–11. 🔁
- 79. CIC, Discover Canada, 51.
- 80. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Land as Pedagogy: Nishnaabeg Intelligence and Rebellious Transformation," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3, no. 3 (2014): 1–25.
- 81. Simpson, "Land as Pedagogy," 8. 2
- 82. In a move reminiscent of how the study guide appropriates Indigenous narratives for its own ends, Simpson remarks that "the academy's primary intention is to use Indigenous peoples and our knowledge systems to legitimize settler colonial authority within education as a training ground to legitimize settler colonial authority over Indigenous peoples and our nations in Canadian society." Simpson, "Land as Pedagogy," 22.

- 83. For a Canadian naval account of Able Seaman's role in the Siege of Lucknow, see Royal Canadian Navy, "William Hall Earned the Victoria Cross for Heroism During the Relief of Lucknow," modified February 20, 2019, http://www.navymarine.forces.gc.ca/en/navy-life/history-heroes/heroes-hall.page.
- 84. CIC, Discover Canada, 50.
- 85. CIC, Discover Canada, 50.
- 86. Out of twenty-eight photographs showing the "land," fifteen photographs show empty wilderness or wilderness with animals; ten photographs show "white" people in recreational activities on majestic landscapes; one photograph shows logging; and one photograph shows oil and gas extraction. I interpreted pictures of land through the captions in the study guide, that described a physical feature of Canada or use of land by Canadians.
- 87. *Terra nullius* is legal doctrine for legally empty and was a key construct of colonial expansion. For a recent comparative examination of its use in settler colonies and the construction of property, see Brenna Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property: Law, Land and Racial Regimes of Ownership* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 102.
- 88. Glen Coulthard, "From Wards of the State to Subjects of Recognition? Marx, Indigenous People, and the Politics of Dispossession in Denendeh," in *Theorizing Native Studies*, ed. Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 56–98.
- 89. Coulthard, "From Wards," 71. Coulthard is not arguing that the exploitation of labor is not a key part of colonial-capitalism, but rather, that it is the dispossession of land and their matching place-based ethics, onto-epistemologies and relationships with land that set up peoples for the exploitation of their labor.
- 90. Coulthard, "From Wards," 75. 2
- 91. Sandra D. Styres, *Pathways for Remembering and Recognizing Indigenous Thought in Education: Philosophies of Iethi'nihsténha Ohwentsia'kékha (Land)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 38.
- 92. Styres, *Pathways*, 55 (emphasis mine).
- 93. Styres, Pathways, 55.
- 94. Styres, Pathways, 61. 2
- 95. CIC, *Discover Canada*, 14; 49; 50.
- 96. CIC, Discover Canada, 51.
- 97. Joseph Massad, "The Post-Colonial Colony: Time, Space, and Bodies in Palestine/Israel," in *The Preoccupation of Postcolonial Studies*, ed. Fawzia Afzal-Khan and Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 311–346.
- 98. Interestingly enough, an Arab adage says, *el ard'ard*, which translates into "Land is honor." This adage highlights the links between land, women, sexuality, identity, and honor as metonymic signifiers.
- 99. Styres, Pathways, 38. 2
- 100. Styres, Pathways, 55. 2
- 101. CIC. Discover Canada, 9. 2
- 102. Razack, Casting Out, 5. 2
- 103. For example, see Verna St. Denis, "Silencing Aboriginal Curricular Content and Perspectives through Multiculturalism: 'There are Other Children Here.'" *Review of*

- 104. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 7. Edward Said used this phrase to describe how Westerners can take on a host of roles vis a vis the Orient that always relationally positions them as superior.
- 105. Stephanie Levitz, "New Citizenship Study Guide Highlights Indigenous Peoples, Canadian Responsibilities," *The Star*, July 23, 2017, https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/07/23/new-citizenship-study-guide-highlights-indigenous-peoples-canadian-responsibilities.html.
- 106. Phillip Blake, "Statements to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry," in *Dene Nation:*The Colony Within, ed. Watkins Mel (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 5–9. See also Minister of Supply and Services Canada, Northern Frontier

 Northern Homeland: The Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry: Volume

 One (Ottawa, ON: Supply and Services Canada, 1977).

å <u>Bio</u>

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Lucy El-Sherif is researching Palestinian folk-dancing, dabke, and its engagement by Muslim youth on Turtle Island for her dissertation at the University of Toronto. Her past work has looked pedagogies of citizenship, the socio-spatial production of outsider subjectivities, and narratives of belonging for Muslim and Arab communities. Her research interests include citizenship, subjectivity, and cultural production.



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Publishing to Find Comrades: Constructions of Temporality and Solidarity in Autonomous Print Cultures

Stevphen Shukaitis and Joanna Figiel

ABSTRACT Open source publishing, in all its versions and mutations, is an area of research and media practice that has become much more popular recently. It is precisely because of this the questions it raises for cultural production are today all the more pressing. How does a form of media production where the good produced is given away to people sustain itself? How can it produce livelihoods for its associated "below the line" editorial workers, as well all the other associated forms of cultural labor undertaken in the production chain, from distribution to retail? This essay considers some of these questions, not from a general perspective, but rather from how they filter through and affect the nature of autonomous print cultures. For these print projects questions about labor, conditions and the sustainability of the project are all the more pressing because of how they relate to and are embedded within the goal of the social movement organizing that they emerge from.

There is no difference between what a book talks about and how it is made. 1

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari

The ecology of practices \dots is a function of the multiplicity of constraints and causalities and unintended meanings and effects that go into make up the situations in which particular forms of value or usefulness are produced. These are situations of co-dependence—or events \dots as reciprocal capture..., where what matters here and now is a certain 'holding together with others,' although not in consensus as much as symbiosis. $\frac{2}{}$

Joe Kelleher

"One publishes to find comrades!" This declaration by André Breton neatly encapsulates a key, but not often explored, conception and motivation that underlies the functioning of autonomous print cultures. For what Breton says here is not a facile declaration, but really something that is worth reflecting on to consider changes in the current and shifting relationship between publishing, politics, and cultural labor more generally. It is precisely *not* that one publishes to propagate and spread an already conceived idea; this is not a publishing of revelation, of bringing consciousness to an already imagined fixed audience. Rather, Breton is describing something that might be called a publishing of resonance. It is not a publishing practice that is necessarily intent on trying to convince anyone of anything, but rather is working towards establishing conditions for the coproduction of meaning. This is a publishing that takes the production of publics, or more accurately what Michael Warner calls counterpublics, as the core of what it does and is. Thus, publishing is not something that occurs at the end of a process of thought, a bringing forth of artistic and intellectual labor, but rather establishes a social process where this may further develop and unfold.

In this sense, the organization of the productive process of publishing could itself be thought to be as important as what is produced. This is what Deleuze and Guattari gesture to by saying that a book's content and production methods are the same. Joe Kelleher might say that both aspects emerge from the ecology of practices from which the text emerge and which it takes part in holding together. How is that? It follows logically from the idea that one publishes in order to animate new forms of social relationships, which are in turn made possible through the extension and development of publishing. Publishing calls forth into itself, and through itself, certain skills of social cooperation that are valuable and worthy, even if what is produced as an end product perhaps is not an exalted outcome. Perhaps that is not so important at all. In short, publishing is the initiation of a process where embodied processes of knowing and understanding are produced and reproduced, rather than the creation of fixed objects where complete understandings are fixed and contained. The production of the community of shared meaning and collaboration, the production of a public, contains within it a wealth that is often greater than a single text. The production of the text can only be valuable because of the social relationships with which it is embedded and through which it produces meaning.

This essay explores, based on fifteen years of involvement and research in autonomous print cultures, the forms of sociality produced within their organization processes. ⁵ In particular, it explores the connections and overlaps between recent academic debates around open-source publishing and how these matters are handled within more directly politically oriented print projects. Open-source publishing, in all its versions and mutations, is an area of research and media practice which has become much popular recently. It is precisely because of this popularity that the questions it raises for cultural production are today all the more pressing. How is a form of media production, where the goods produced are given away to people, able to sustain itself? How can it produce livelihoods for its associated "below the line" editorial workers, as well all the other associated forms of cultural labor undertaken in the production and chain, from distribution to retail? Is open-source publishing another area where, as figures such as Jaron Lanier would argue, the dynamics of digital production and consumption have effectively gutted and destroyed all the middle-class jobs previously available, only to replace them with a much smaller handful of people employed by scribd.com, and the outsourcing of the production of digital hardware? This essay will consider some of these questions, not from a general perspective, but rather from how they filter through and affect the nature of autonomous and independent publishing. 8

Project Background & Method

The research underlying and informing this essay originates in seventeen years of participation in politically oriented media production and publishing. This has included working in radio and music production, journalism, and thirteen years as part of a longstanding, politically oriented arts and media publishing collective that has released nearly 500 titles during its existence. This longstanding involvement should not be understood as "pre-theoretical" in content but rather as constituting a form of observant participation that over the years increasingly raised and presented questions about the organization of media production. During the past nine years one of the authors has edited an open-access book series focusing on the overlap of avant-garde art, labor, and politics. While it is slowly becoming more common in the English-speaking world for open-access efforts to include book production as well as journals, particularly among academic presses, it is still less common than in other languages. This skepticism about open-source publishing is relatively common among left-oriented publishing houses that might be expected to take a more critical approach to questions of intellectual property

and ownership. But this is perhaps not all that surprising given production and economic models involved.

This long period of involvement in open-source media production led the authors to explicitly formulate a research project around questions of the nature of openness and the production of sociality within autonomous print cultures. As a part of this project, they conducted interviews over several years with people working for publishers, infoshops, distributors, and archives, primarily in the Greater London area. The guiding orientation in selecting this range of projects, as opposed to only publishers, is that there is more to the production of autonomous print cultures besides just the production of the media itself. There is a broader media ecology of different roles and positions that exist. In other words, publishers do not exist by themselves, but in a broader set of relationships through which media is produced and circulated. The goal of the research was to understand how forms of open-source print production exist within and as part of these circuits rather than in an artificially constructed isolation from them.

The logic of exploring different aspects of a media ecology is that it allows for getting a sense of the different roles played within the broader process of circulation. A concise table included below gives an overview of different autonomous print projects in the Greater London metropolitan area and the various roles and functions they take on. These are roles that are either important to movement politics and cultures, even if they don't necessarily present themselves that way and often may not appear that significant at all. This disjuncture came up in a conversation with a core member of Freedom Books, the longest running anarchist publisher and bookstore in the UK. He thought that when he came to London he would discover a space that would be "thriving with militants who were all ready for going out and fighting the Nazis or the cops or smashing the state" but instead encountered it as a space where usually you would find "one bloke going in a room making himself cups of tea on a regular basis." This is, needless to say, somewhat less dramatic than what was imagined. But in the long run it may indeed be just as important when one considers how much of the sociality of political organizing is held together by rather non-exceptional activities of endless conversations and support, many of which take place over cups of tea.

Project Type / Role Played

Corporate Watch Research, campaigning, magazine

Freedom Books Infoshop, publisher

Feminist Archive Archive, event & meeting space

Lawrence & Wishart Publisher, books & journals

Mute Publisher, magazine, online, books

Active Distribution Publisher & distributor
AK UK Publisher & distributor
Housmans Bookstore, events space
Through Europe Digital writing platform

International Times Previously print, becoming digital

The positioning and emergence of different projects greatly shaped how they viewed their activity and role. Members of Active Distribution, which developed out of the punk scene and anti-hunting campaigns, tended to understand book production and distribution as a logical development of the DIY zine production found within the punk scene. From that perspective, the use of short run printing and open source approaches are just other sets of tools that are up for use. In comparison, the Feminist Archive is less concerned with questions of producing media and more so on the collection and preservation of texts with the goal being to pass on the experiences and ideas of feminist

organizers between generations. The goal is not simply to record and preserve history but to re-activate and make this history useful to the present.

The social embeddedness of projects within political milieus have key effects on the content they produce and distribute. It is not surprising that publishers with a political orientation would use their political orientation to inform their editorial decisions. But the connection is sometimes more direct. For example, the activities of a group such as Corporate Watch, both in terms of their research and publishing, are largely shaped by the pressing concerns and needs of the organizing campaigns they work with. Their activities are not based around abstract questions, around quality divorced from social context, but by the needs of present situation. As described by their members, these decisions are motivated by a desire to facilitate long term involvement in political organizing, which is essential given how the amorphous and ephemeral nature of existing structures functions. This can be contrasted with a project like Through Europe, an online publishing platform, which functions more like a gallery, curating series of conversations and debates. The temporality produced by that approach is less pressing, less directly linked, even if still in relationship with everyday political concerns.

A worker from Housmans emphasized the relationship between political organizing and bookstores, adding that this kind of reciprocal support is very important but does not happen nearly as much as it could. The varying projects and spaces tended to be embedded in, or connected to, different constellations of networks and social relationships. This varied from Active Distribution's emergence from the punk scene and networks of touring bands (which was felt to have diminished in recent years) to the more traditional party affiliations that had previously characterized publishers like Pluto Press and the distributor Central Books, even if they had ceased to exist a number of years ago. While not all projects interviewed discussed these forms of mutual interdependence and support in the same terms or ways, notions around this did tend to reoccur fairly often. Most notably, this seemed to come up when discussing how forms of new digital technologies and open-access practices could have the capacity to disrupt the social relations of print production and circulation, and perhaps bring an end to certain projects. An editor from Lawrence & Wishart suggested that widespread adoption of open access could lead to the folding of a large number of independent publishers. Similarly, someone from Housmans worried that moving to digital-only publishing could have adverse effects on physical bookstores. This was not seen to be an absolute negative, but rather a case of how changing conditions require rethinking and discussing the role played by various actors within circuits of print production and circulation.

These concerns were not only about open access but also about the adoption of new tools and methods, such as the use of short run printing. A member of AK UK, which functions both as a publisher and distributor, noted the difficulties often caused when an existing title is moved to short-run printing. This is because short-run printing involves higher per unit production costs, and thus higher prices, with the end result often being that a book ends up costing a higher price that likely will be acceptable to university libraries but is often off-putting for most readers. In the end, this leads to a restriction and shrinking of what is available and circulated, which is paradoxical as the stated goal of moving to short-run printing is to keep a title in print. The question then is less whether the use of short-run printing (or any other digital technology for that matter) is good in itself, but rather what effect it has on the project's overall goal. In an article in *Strike Magazine*, Jon from Active Distribution argued for distinguishing radical publishing on the basis of its independent DIY spirit rather than a reliance on pre-packaged tools or approaches, which he compares with flat pack furniture, adding that how to draw that distinction is a "neverending argument." 10

Resources, Organization and Free Labor in Autonomous Media Production

"Booksellers are rather odd. This is not surprising since we have all managed to escape or avoid more regular forms of work." 11

David Batterham

Thus, while the question concerning open source might initially appear to be one of technology, it is equally, if not more, a question around access to and control over resources and power. In other words, who has access to resources, how, and what projects are able to continue (and even thrive) despite not having access, at least commercially, to significant resources. It may seem surprising that autonomous print projects rely on forms of free labor, particularly given how much this has come under intense scrutiny elsewhere in the arts and cultural economy. Within autonomous print culture, discussions around the ethics of free labor are not approached in isolation but are embedded within larger questions about resources and the organization of people's lives. An editor from Lawrence & Wishart emphasized that much of the work of publishing is invisibilized labor. In other words, it mainly takes place in the background and is not thought of much, not only by readers and the public but sometimes by authors as well. It was emphasized how this work is important even if it is often not appreciated or even recognized. This echoes the analysis made by socialist feminists around the discounting and devaluation of social reproductive labor. 12 This argument is further driven home by the Lawrence & Wishart editor pointing out that publishing is predominantly a female industry as it is background work, where the publication, careers, and egos of primarily male authors are facilitated by invisibilized female labor. Kathleen Fitzpatrick has expanded on this in her work, analyzing how unseen and unpaid labor is absolutely indispensable to academic publishing, in particular the peer review process, as well as its other aspects. $\frac{13}{12}$

This is not to reduce everything to a question of remuneration. It does, however, point to a certain kind of difficulty or tension that was acknowledged by people from Housmans. As they described it, relying on free labor in their operations put themselves in somewhat of a difficult ethical position. But much like the comparison they had made before, they understood being an activist bookstore as a form of political organizing. And they stuck with this comparison when considering the issue of free labor. Thus, in the way that one would not typically be expected to be paid for engaging in social movement organizing (aside from the appearance of magical Soros money), it was suggested that these were primarily political activities done for their own good rather than as a job. A more positive spin on this idea of non-payment can be seen in the approach of Active Distribution. Active Distribution chooses to not pay themselves, to deliberately remain a smaller project. This is not because they are not capable of scaling up into a larger publishing and distribution operation which pays. Rather, the drive is to keep Active Distribution as an operation that deliberately keeps away all that comes along with becoming a full-time operation. This enables them to add only a very small margin to the distribution costs of books. Thus, it is often possible to purchase radical books from Active for a much lower price than anywhere else. And this enables Active to make available books, pamphlets, and other forms of media more widely and cheaply than would be possible otherwise. Members of Active support themselves through part-time jobs or other arrangements rather than relying upon their publishing and distribution work as employment.

Other projects tend to support their operations through some form of crosssubsidization. Housmans' building was donated by a pacifist priest. This is important as, given the price of real estate now, it would be virtually impossible for a new bookstore to function as Housmans does while paying commercial rent. The editors from Mute emphasized cross-subsidizing editorial and publishing work with technology and consulting work, or from projects with universities. This can be compared with the members of AK UK or Corporate Watch who pay themselves for their work, but as only part-time jobs, and thus end up relying on other sources of income, whether from other jobs or from social benefits. There were various contextual factors around housing and local conditions that allowed people across various projects to keep doing what they wanted to do with them despite the incomes derived from them not being sufficient. But this was also seen to be another restriction on who could be involved, which was also felt to be somewhat problematic. Overall it seemed quite common that there was some form of cross-subsidization of the publishing project happening, though varying in what form it took. An editor from Lawrence & Wishart claimed that historically nearly every radical publisher has started with someone (or a collection of people) putting funds in to start the project without which survival would not be possible. In some ways, the use of free labor could be understood as just another form of cross-subsidization in the form of time rather than currency. The question then, as phrased by editors from Mute, is how to balance out these tensions in the mode of cross-subsidization used, and hopefully without making it, as they felt their own project had become, "too complex."

The question then becomes less whether relying on free or volunteer labor is inherently a problem in itself, and more a question of what is produced through these free or invisible labors. 14 If editorial work is a kind of social reproduction, this would be then to ask what does it socially reproduce? Can it take part in what Beverly Skeggs has described as the process of imagining personhood differently that is possible from within autonomist working class practices of valuing differently? 15 Do the circuits of autonomous print cultures serve to reproduce social capital and notoriety for authors that is built on unacknowledged collective efforts? Or do they create different circuits of value production and sociality while spreading and developing political ideas? The answer is, not surprisingly, more than a bit messy. It's not always very easy to clearly to determine precisely how a particular print project is engaged in such a process. What can be said is that in instances where it appears someone is attempting to use the dispersed processes of autonomous print culture for personal advancement or careerism without giving back to the project, it often leads to denunciations and intense debates.

Autonomous print cultures ultimately exist as modes of creating and shaping affordances in media and political ecologies. This concept of affordances, coming from ecological psychology, describes modes of environmental perception, it describes how the characteristics of objects enable and facilitate (or constrain) patterns of interaction. 16 Media forms, both in production and circulation, also have their affordances, enabling and preventing patterns of interaction. The affordances of media forms are not set in advance, they are solely determined by technological form. Rather it is a question of how technological form of print production intersects with social form. What do the media forms and methods utilized tend to facilitate in social relationship and organization? Do they have a demand character tending to emphasize the collective social relations that are produced? The difficulty arises when a certain form of "openness" is celebrated, and fetishized, that serves to gloss over and further invisibilize the relations and process of print production rather than referring back to and drawing out the relations and processes. Iranian philosopher Reza Negarestani frames the problem in that openness is not a given condition that is already understood, but rather a process of understanding how "our openness and consequently our modes of interaction are determined by our capacities. We can only be open to contingency within certain specific limits that we can afford." 17 The openness of open publishing is thus not to be found with the properties of

digital tools and methods, whether new or otherwise, but in how those tools are taken up and utilized within various social milieus.

Conclusion: Towards an Autonomous Media Logisticality

self-organized infrastructures . . . through which difference is organized. . . . [These] new collective structures of small, translocal micro-organizations that are neither artist collectives nor artist run initiatives, nor art centers . . . and that are being used to produce, and that are being generated for research, production, learning, gathering, dissemination, and action" 18

Marion von Osten

In *Digitize This Book!* Gary Hall, one of the cofounders of Open Humanities Press, accurately describes how the ethics and politics of open-source publishing do not come to us in an already manufactured way, but rather they have "to be creatively produced and invented by their users in the process of actually using them." 19 This is precisely what this research has found. It is not that autonomous print cultures have either totally embraced or rejected the digital tools most commonly used in open-access publishing, whether academic or otherwise. Rather their use is not dealt with as an abstract question, but rather part of a series of larger considerations around the social relations of print production, distribution, and circulation. These are questions that become part of building the temporality and sociality of the milieus from which they emerge.

Thus, what we tend to see are not unified answers to the question of best ways to use digital print technologies, but rather different forms of adoption or rejection that are particular to varying projects. The use of digital tools becomes another part of what Marion von Osten describes as the infrastructure of small-scale collectives, widely varying in their operations and taking part in the ongoing production of difference. Autonomous print culture functions as a form of what Ned Rossiter calls logistical media. ²⁰ While Rossiter is mainly discussing software and media that is used to organize the operations of the logistics industry, there is some sense in applying the concept to autonomous print culture. For Rossiter, the key function of logistical media is not just operational in a technical sense, but shaping the subjectivity of labor. For Rossiter, logistical media are those that determine our present situation, even if they are often not recognized, operating in the background. Autonomous print cultures operate very much in a similar manner, operating in the background organizing memories and histories of political organizing, and often serving as a concrete infrastructure through which organizing occurs.

Autonomous print cultures serve to shape subjectivity of transversal relationships operating between the different projects discussed. They function as a transversal sociality. But unlike a logistics of command and operational control, they function as logistics from below, as part of what Fred Moten and Stefano Harney describe as the logisticality of the undercommons. Ultimately, autonomous print cultures are not about print, or just about print, but rather the worlds and times produced by and through print cultures. In that sense, they are far from examples of best management practice and closer to models of world building. As someone from the Feminist Library quipped, "our problem is we're all radicals, we are not managers, we don't know how to manage"—and this was suggested as being the abiding problem of collective projects since the 1970s. The irony is that, despite not thinking of themselves as managers, in certain ways that's exactly what they are—or at least organizers. But what is being organized is not the maximization of surplus value for shareholders, but the growing of other kinds of value, and the continued development of other forms of value.

Jan Voss from Boekie Woekie, an artist bookstore in Amsterdam, describes how their space functions less like a traditional business, but more like "a continuous performance . . . walkable sculpture in progress . . . mental dance floor . . . an art school . . . a sponge, saturated with a mixture of playfulness and tears of sadness and laughter." 22 Voss continues to say that none of the founders of Boekie Woekie ever really intended to become booksellers, rather it was a necessary function that was taken on and helped them to interact and accomplish what they wanted to with each other and in the context where they were operating. This is the role of autonomous print cultures, to build forms of temporality and tools for relating in the present. The exact purposes are not given in advance, but found and elaborated together.

The politics of autonomous print culture must start from a question: What is the openness to the world produced through the social relationships of publishing that we currently find ourselves in? This is not a question that can be answered by looking at the politics of media production just by themselves, nor the labor involved in the production of media, no matter how directly political or not they might appear to be. Rather it is a question of media ecologies, where print politics are embedded within larger ecologies of media production, circulation, distribution, and consumption—and at a time when the difference between these previously distinct actions have tended increasingly to blur into one another. It is not just a question of the best way to organize autonomous print and media production, although that is an important ask, but also the best ways to organize the publics and undercommons that are articulated through autonomous media production, and which feedback through and support the continuing development and lifeworld of autonomous media production. Like Breton would still say today, one publishes in order to find comrades—not merely to find comrades as the consumers of information or media, but rather as co-conspirators and accomplices.

Notes

- 1. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 4.
- 2. Joe Kelleher, "A Golden Surface: On Virtuosity and Cosmopolitics," in *International Politics and Performance: Critical Aesthetics and Creative Practice*, ed. Jenny Edkins & Adrian Kea (New York: Routledge, 2013), 108. See also Spheres Editorial Collective, "Ecologies of Change," *Spheres* Number 2 (December 2015): http://spheres-journal.org/2-ecologies-of-change-editorial/.
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å Bio

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≛ <u>Bio</u>

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Viewing Japanese Incarceration from Above & Below: Imperial Landscape and Racial Liberalism in Ansel Adams's *Born Free and Equal*

Christian G Ravela

ABSTRACT This article examines the role of landscape in the visual and narrative representation of Japanese incarceration in Ansel Adams's *Born Free and Equal*. Specifically, by analyzing the way it both draws upon and reworks what art historian Albert Boime calls the magisterial and reverential gaze, I argue that *Born Free* revises the thematic and visual trope of US frontier mythology to articulate a US racial liberal "structure of feeling" in the American century. *Born Free* oscillates between landscapes and portraits to establish an aestheticized account of frontier nature. In so doing, it forges a vision of racial democracy that can simultaneously "americanize" the Japanese body and universalize US global power. In other words, *Born Free*'s aestheticized frontier positions the minoritized Japanese body as a national icon that testifies to the racial liberal values of the US, and thus can authorize American (neocolonial) power globally.

The Japanese Relocation, a short propaganda film created by the US Office of War Information in 1942, ends with a long, panning shot of the Manzanar relocation camp. The camera slowly pans to the left, unfurling seemingly endless rows of barracks in the middle ground and the peaks and valleys of the Sierra Nevada mountains in the background (Figure 1). 1



Figure 1: A still from the end of The Japanese Relocation

Providing voice over to the scene, Milton Eisenhower, the director of the US War Relocation Authority (WRA) at the time and the brother of Dwight Eisenhower, asserts that US incarceration of people of Japanese descent sets world standards in the treatment of "people who may have loyalty to an enemy nation." In so doing, he claims the US balances the concerns of national security with the "principles of Christian"

decency" that can be the model for all. Eisenhower's phrasing is revealing in its tortured attempt to avoid the most salient social and legal problems of incarceration for the US public at the time. Note how stating "people who may have loyalty to an enemy nation" avoids direct acknowledgment of the racial dimensions of incarceration since the suspicion of disloyalty, sabotage, and espionage disregard citizenship status. Note also how invoking "principles of Christian decency" elides the problem of the constitutionality of Japanese incarcerations, which did not become legally justified until the notorious Korematsu v. United States case in 1944.

Yet these inconsistencies and tensions are quickly elided by the film's central claim about the so-called Japanese relocation: the camps are "pioneer Communities."

The closing shot only reaffirms such an argument. The sublimity of the mountains and desert plains attests to a raw natural world that tests the mettle of would-be pioneers. Or, as Eisenhower explains, the "land is raw, untamed but full of opportunity." Such a formulation repeats the central narrative trope of US frontier mythology—the unbounded land signals an unlimited horizon of progress. 8 Indeed, Eisenhower leans into this progressive frontier narrative when he describes the film's account of Japanese incarceration as a "prologue to a story that is yet to be told." Of course, this rehearsal of American frontier mythology is not the same as its nineteenth-century predecessor. For one, the pioneers adventurously staking their fortune in the raw lands of the frontier are not the white mountaineers of the nineteenth century. Second, the closing of the continental frontier has opened onto an oceanic horizon in the twentieth century. Last, the ends of the frontier are not material progress and civilizational expansion but political and social inclusion. If one is not to take the pioneering framing to be simply government propaganda, then how is one to understand this revision of frontier mythology, particularly its racial imaginary? How does it mediate the complex US imperial and domestic racial politics of the emerging American century?

This article answers these questions by examining the role of landscape in the visual and narrative representation of Japanese incarceration in Ansel Adams's *Born Free and Equal (Born Free)*. ¹⁰ Specifically, by analyzing the way it both draws upon and reworks what art historian Albert Boime calls the magisterial and reverential gaze, ¹¹ I argue that *Born Free* revises the thematic and visual trope of US frontier mythology to articulate a US racial liberal "structure of feeling" in the American century. ¹² *Born Free* oscillates between landscapes and portraits to establish an aestheticized account of frontier nature. In so doing, it forges a vision of racial democracy that can simultaneously "Americanize" the Japanese body and universalize US global Power. ¹³ In other words, like the much lauded all-Japanese American 442nd Infantry Regiment, the 100th Infantry Battalion, the all-African American 332nd Fighter Group, and the 477th Bombardment Group, *Born Free*'s aestheticized frontier positions the minoritized Japanese body as a national icon that testifies to the racial liberal values of the US, and thus can authorize American (neocolonial) power globally. ¹⁴

Japanese Incarceration and Imperial Landscape

Within popular US historical memory, the history of Japanese incarceration—if remembered at all—is seen as an exceptional domestic event of wartime panic that has no relation to US histories of US colonialism. Yet, the history of Japanese incarceration was deeply tied to the inter-imperial dynamics between the US, Japan, and Great Britain across the Pacific. Indeed, the bombing of Pearl Harbor, which led to the infamous Executive Order 9066, was an attack that was neither exclusively in Hawaii nor only in the US Pacific colonies. It was part of Japan's inter-imperial strategy across the Pacific Rim, which included both US colonies and British colonies like Hong Kong, Malaya, and

Singapore. 15 Thus, it is unsurprising that the incarceration of people of Japanese descent was not exclusively a US phenomenon; Canada and Australia pursued similar policies. Though not acknowledged by the national public, the US imperial investments in the Pacific was certainly on the minds of political and military leaders at the time. Indeed, as historian Daniel Immerwahr notes, FDR's infamy speech had initially included the Philippines alongside Hawaii as places of paramount national concern after the attack but was later relegated to the longer list of other territories attacked by Japan. 16 In so doing, Hawaii was discursively incorporated into US national boundaries while the Philippines was tossed among other foreign colonial places. Such revisions reflect connections between US imperial life abroad and domestic (racial) order at home, particularly the domestic political calculations deemed necessary to galvanize national publics towards war.

Furthermore, the colonial underpinnings of Japanese incarceration were not only the result of the United States' supposedly anomalous imperial adventures abroad after the 1890s; critically, they were continuous with longer US histories of settler colonial expansion. Hence, as Native studies and Asian American studies scholars have recently shown, the practices of Japanese incarceration drew upon and intersected with the carceral practices and geographies of longstanding US settler colonialism. 17 Nothing exemplifies this better than how the location of so-called relocation centers and isolation centers were placed on Native lands such as the Poston Relocation Center, Gila River Relocation Center, and the Leupp Isolation Center. Predictably, there was administrative and personnel overlap and crossover between the War Relocation Administration (WRA) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). For instance, John Collier, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, advocated for the Poston Relocation Center, which was run by his office. Moreover, Dillon S. Myer, the Director of the War Relocation Authority (WRA) for the much of its existence, later became the Commissioner of Indian Affairs during which time he led the Indian termination policy.

Historical amnesia of the colonial underpinnings of Japanese incarceration is not simply the effect of their tertiary position within popular historical narratives of WWII but an effect of the logics and ideology of US colonialism itself—both earlier settler expansion and overseas imperial ambitions. According to historian Alyosha Goldstein, US colonial practices of the eighteenth and nineteenth century were characterized by an "incorporative" logic. 18 US dominion over acquired territory was rationalized as building an "empire of and for liberty" through the assumption of eventual statehood of land and the extension of citizenship to subject populations. 19 After the 1890s, US colonial practices were governed by an "unincorporative" logic. 20 US dominion of overseas territories was understood to be temporary in the service of training subject populations in the democratic ways of self-government à la the "white man's burden." 21 As different as these logics seem to be, Goldstein importantly observes that "the doctrines of territorial incorporation and unincorporation each professed to affirm the benevolent intent of US dominion while justifying particular strategies for territorial acquisition and control." 22

Japanese incarceration was precisely drawn into the "unincorporative" logic of US colonialism to the extent that their treatment is supposed to emblematize the beneficence of the US to the rest of the world. This is perhaps best seen in the way that practices of incarceration changed after 1943. As historian Takashi Fujitani shows, the state and military rationales and the logistical aims of incarceration shift from a racially exclusionary practice to a racial liberal assimilative project. Such a quick about face on the matter does not demonstrate the US state's progressive moral development. Rather, Fujitani convincingly shows that the practice of incarceration indexes the simultaneous and competing rationalizations and strategies of the US state's total war regime as it both

dealt with the internal pressures of managing resources and mobilizing populations as well as encountered competing imperial projects in the Pacific and emergent postcolonial geopolitical actors. Hence, during the initial exclusionary operations of incarceration, a central military fear was that people of Japanese descent would foment resentment and revolution in US racialized minority communities, particularly African American communities, in direct alliance with the Japanese imperial state. This was due to Japan's propaganda campaign that positioned themselves as the "champions of the darker races" of the world, which connected the status of US racialized minorities with racialized colonial subjects across the world. Yet, people of Japanese descent were not exclusively coded as a transnational threat to the domestic racial order. Later, they were elevated as "loyal Japanese Americans" and became a potent ideological symbol of the US as a multiracial democracy to counter Japanese propaganda and to court emerging postcolonial nations under the aegis of Pax Americana in the post-war global order.

Such patriotic representations of Japanese Americans and benevolent representations of incarceration were crafted through a carefully managed process by the US state. As historian Jasmine Alinder explains, the military prohibited incarcerated people of Japanese descent from photographing the assembly centers and relocation camps. ²⁴ (However, some were able to sneak in cameras). At the same time, through the WRA's photography section, the US state hired photographers to document the whole process but censored images that were seen to undermine the US. ²⁵ Furthermore, the Office of War Information created propaganda films about incarceration and distributed them widely through the War Activities Committee of the Motion Picture Industry. Later, however, these restrictions were relaxed and the camps allowed visitors, such as Ansel Adams, to bring cameras and provided photography studios for the incarcerated people. These, of course, were still heavily managed by the state, particularly restricting photography of the barbed wire fences and guard towers of the camps.

Yet, censorship was not the only means of regulating the representation of Japanese incarceration towards US colonial interests, more mundanely and perhaps more insidiously, was the way that these representations (such as The Japanese Relocation that I began with and, as I will show, Adams's Born Free) drew upon longstanding visual conventions of landscape art and cultural codes of frontier mythology to rationalize these policies. In other words, they are part a tradition of what visual cultural theorist W. J. T. Mitchell calls "imperial landscapes." 26 By this concept, Mitchell challenges common understandings of landscape as a genre of painting in art history to, instead, broaden and re-contextualize landscape as a "multisensory medium" in the repertoire of colonial representational practices. 27 Importantly, Mitchell notes that the representational scope of imperial landscape does not just extend to the foreign colonized lands: "it is [also] typically accompanied by a renewed interest in the re-presentation of the home landscape, the 'nature' of the imperial center." 28 In other words, imperial landscaped rationalized colonial projects by representing not only foreign lands as in need of civilization but also domestic lands as a site of imperial identification. Asian American studies scholar lyko Day extends Mitchell's theorization by elaborating the racial logics of imperial landscapes. 29 More specifically, she convincingly shows how romanticized visions of Western landscapes in the 1920s and 1930s (like Ansel Adams's oeuvre) were indicative of romantic anticapitalist logics of settler colonialism. They were not only a nostalgic response to the rise and development of capitalism, but also functioned as sites of white settler colonial identification that simultaneously naturalized settler claims to land and erased Native existence and dispossession.

Yet, the imperial landscape of Japanese incarceration does not simply accept whole cloth the visual conventions of earlier US imperial landscapes. They are modified in ways that

index the unincorporative logics of twentieth-century US colonial practices. In particular, they draw upon and revise what art historian Albert Boime calls the "magisterial gaze" and the "reverential gaze." Characterized by a downward high-angle visual perspective, the magisterial gaze was a visual trope that united multiple schools of nineteenth-century US landscape painting and indexed a "sociopolitical ideology of expansionist thought" that undercut the natural world. In contrast, the reverential gaze was visual trope of European landscape painting characterized by an upward low-angle visual perspective and indexed sociopolitical ideology of nationalist thought. As I will show, the imperial landscape of Japanese incarceration draws upon both visual tropes as way to address the ideological and racial demands of the emergent geopolitical vision of an integrated Pacific that will come to dominate the American century after the war.

Americanizing the Japanese Body and Universalizing US Global Power

In the fall of 1943, after prompting from his longtime friend Ralph Palmer Merritt from the Sierra Club, Ansel Adams went to Manzanar, California, and photographed the lives of incarcerated people of Japanese descent. 32 Located between the Sierra Nevadas and Death Valley, Manzanar proved to be an ideal location for Adams as he was all too familiar with the area. What emerged out of this project was a short booklet that documented camp life and Adams's own reflections on Japanese incarceration.

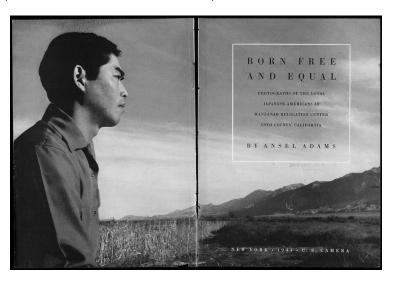


Figure 2: The title page photograph of Born Free and Equal

What is striking about *Born Free* is the way Adams used the opportunity to combine his own interest in nature photography with documentary photography. The prominence of both has led scholars to find a frontier subtext in *Born Free*. For instance, Asian American visual culture studies scholar Elena Tajima Creef writes, "In the logic of Adams's narrative, the Japanese Americans are fortunate to have been transported to the desert where they can be transmuted by the landscape and disciplined through the camp's self-sustaining work into productive citizens." Like the wilderness of the nineteenth-century frontier, the "desert wasteland" is subjected to human control through Japanese labor and thus brings civilization where putatively there was none. In the process, however, the Japanese American is made anew. The struggle with the brutal conditions of nature strips the Japanese American qua frontier pioneer of their cultural past—or perhaps, in this case, racial past—and transforms them into, to quote from Turner himself, "a new product that is [Japanese] American." Adams is subjected to human control through Japanese American qua frontier pioneer of their cultural past—or perhaps, in this

Such a reading of *Born Free*'s frontier subtext is certainly accurate. However, I would suggest that it does not fully capture the ideological role of frontier imagery since it pivots on the notion of the dignifying and transformative effect of work. Indeed, even though Adams himself implicitly draws upon it throughout *Born Free*, 37 he forwards a very different relationship between the Japanese body and frontier nature as the booklet's central aim, which he describes in the *Forward*:

For many years I have photographed the Sierra Nevada, striving to reveal by the clear statement of the lens those qualities of the natural scene which claim the emotional and spiritual response of the people. In these years of strain and sorrow, the grandeur, beauty, and quietness of the mountains are more important to us than ever before. I have tried to record the influence of the tremendous landscape of Inyo on the life and spirit of thousands of people living by force of circumstance in the Relocation Center of Manzanar. 38

In highlighting the "natural scene['s \dots] claim [on] the emotional and spiritual response on the people," Adams is thus interested in capturing the aesthetic experience of frontier nature for the incarcerated people of Japanese descent. 39 Born Free's opening image visualizes precisely this aesthetic relationship (Figure 2). 40 The two-page photograph contains a profile of a Japanese American man staring contemplatively on one side, and the burgeoning crescent of a mountain range on the other. Situated in the foreground of the frame, the Japanese American man dominates the image, endowing him with a stately quality. His majesty is further fortified by the camera's slight upward angle that places the viewer in a reverential position. In effect, Adams has visually elevated the Japanese American man, if not greater than, at the very least, equal to the splendor of the mountains. Yet, this monumentalizing does not show the Japanese American man working away on the soil, struggling against nature; rather, he is sitting and staring off toward the distant mountains. Indeed, like looking up at a mountain, the upward angle of the photograph directs the viewer to look at its peak, the man's face as he looks out into the distance. In other words, rather than the dignifying and transformative effect of work and the commanding power of human labor on the natural world, the photograph illustrates an act of aesthetic contemplation and reverence through the experience of the natural sublime.

This aesthetic encounter, I suggest, encapsulates Born Free's organizing visual grammar specifically the link between its portraits and its landscapes—as a scene of the aesthetic experience of frontier nature. In this way, my reading of Born Free builds on Thy Phu's analysis of landscape ideology in detention photography of Japanese incarceration. 41 However, I would like to historically specify her claim by situating the aesthetic appeals to frontier nature in Born Free as part of the racial liberal project to transform notions of American identity as racially inclusive. Adams's aestheticism towards natural landscapes is unsurprising. As Jasmine Alinder points out, Adams had long self-identified as an aesthetician and sincerely believed in the social significance of aesthetic experience of nature. 42 But what is the social and political significance of aesthetic experience in the context of Japanese incarceration in WWII? As I will show, this aestheticizing of frontier nature and the Japanese body as well as linking them together through an aesthetic vision not only offers an account of the Americanization of the Japanese American that parallels and reinforces the one that pivots on the dignifying effects of work. More significantly, the aestheticism offers an imaginative position beyond history that can performatively redefines American identity and belonging as inclusive of racial difference. Put differently, Born Free's visualization of aesthetic experience gives visual form to racial liberal structure of feeling since its appeal to an experience of transcendence identifies the

Japanese body with romantic frontier landscape to erase their "alienness" and thus indigenize them as one among many other settlers in a racial liberal US. $\frac{43}{2}$



Figure 3: A portrait of a young Japanese American girl.



Figure 4: A portrait of a young Japanese American girl.



Figure 5: A portrait of Yeko Yamamoto.

Born Free's portraits are striking in their strong close-ups of the face. Such direct attention explicitly counters the numerous racist caricatures of people of Japanese descent that were circulating throughout the US visual public sphere at the time. 44 Indeed, as Creef observes, Born Free's first couple of portraits largely feature school-age Japanese American girls (Figures 3, 4, 5). 45 Through their dress and hairstyles, the portraits encode them within the US visual idiom of innocent white girlhood and thus attenuate the threat of racialized Japanese masculinity. However, Adams's gender choices do more than familiarize people of Japanese descent as non-threatening. Adams's composition had a more specific aesthetic project in mind—one that fed into the normalization of Japanese Americans to the US public. Adams explains this project in his "note on photography":

I have felt strongly that most sociological photography is unnecessarily barren of human or imaginative qualities; a professional idiom has developed which in its stark realism often defeats its purpose. In this undertaking I felt that the individual was of greater importance than the group; in a sense each individual represents the group in a most revealing way. I also feel that a consistently oblique approach to people weakens the impact of their personalities. Hence most of the heads are photographed looking directly into the lens and therefore directly at the spectator. $\frac{46}{}$

Here, Adams raises a stylistic and philosophical objection to what he calls "sociological photography." 47 Stylistically, sociological photography decenters individual personality

and thus, philosophically, obscures the "human or imaginative qualities" of people. 48 Even though Adams criticizes this "stark realism," it is does not mean Adams is not also working within his own "professional idiom" in *Born Free*. 49 Indeed, as Thy Phu notes, Adams self-consciously photographed his Japanese American subjects as if they were sculpted natural objects akin to the mountains themselves to elicit a merger between portrait and landscape. 50 This landscape style hinges most notably on both Adams's *zone system* technique, which "produc[es] the desired range of negative densities at the moment of exposure," and his modernist compositional eye towards simplified geometric forms. 51 This style of photography is best illustrated in Adams's iconic images of cloud banked skies, moonlit deserts, or enormous geologic formations. Such renderings, however, are less about the natural world per se than the role that it plays in human life. In particular, these natural objects form a visual idiom to capture epiphanic aesthetic experiences of the sublime. 52 In this regard, the individual that Adams describes is a specific romantic conception in which aesthetic experience unifies man with the natural world.

Such an aesthetic ideology works at two levels at the same time in Born Free. It makes the Japanese American body more mountain-like while also making the mountains more human-like. As quasi-mountains, the portraits are meant to be gazed upon with reverence as the viewer is subtly placed below the eye akin to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European landscape paintings. Furthermore, Adams's portraits carefully attend to the tonal gradations and contrasts to highlight sculpted facial features such as the dimple dips and the line curvatures of the cheeks, the subtle shadows that follow the jawline, and the dramatic tonal and textural contrast of the hairline (Figures 3, 4, 5). Such photographic detailing communicates more than the smiling facial gestures of the subject to instead elevate the Japanese American face as a noble national icon. Yet, like the opening photography, the aestheticizing of the face does not only liken it as a natural aesthetic object, but also, the face becomes a viewing subject in its own right. Hence, the lowangled shots of the portraits also direct the viewer's gaze upward toward the implied line of sight of the subject. As Adams explains in his "note on the photography," such head shots are intended to stage a direct encounter between the viewers and the photographed subject. Yet, as these initial portraits of young Japanese American girls make clear, the portraits' implied line of sight also signifies aesthetic vision. Indeed, the subjects are positioned in either three-quarters or two-thirds views (Figures 3, 4, 5), and thus, the portraits have the young girls looking out into the distance.



Figure 6: An overview of Manzanar Relocation Center.



Figure 7: Japanese American farm workers tending to rows of crops.

But at what are they looking? It is, of course, frontier nature. Hence, *Born Free's* landscape photographs continue this visual motif of aesthetic gazing—reverential and magisterial alike. Like earlier projects, Adams inserts several photographs of the Sierra Nevadas in *Born Free* that draw upon his characteristic zone system to represent the natural sublime. These large two-page photos visualize a romantic drama of nature through the contrasts and subtle shifts in the tonal gradations of light in the image. On the one hand, Adams draws upon the familiar semiotics of the American frontier. He writes, "The huge vistas and the stern realities of sun and wind and space symbolize the immensity and opportunity of America—perhaps a vital reassurance following the experiences of enforced exodus." Indeed, the photographs rehearse the civilizational expansion of earlier landscape imagery—from the expansive housing to the agricultural productivity. Such imagery thus concretizes Eisenhower's description of the camps as pioneer communities by framing them within the visual tropes and conventions of the frontier.

Yet, the privileged vista of Adams's eye is not the rolling wilderness but the majesty of the mountains. 54 A case in point are the two photographs that prominently feature both the mountains and the camps (Figures 6 and 7). 55 Asian American visual culture studies scholar Thy Phu reads these photos as Adams's claim that "the camp functioned . . . in harmony with nature." 56 Yet, I would suggest that this harmony has less to do with a pastoral vision of humanity's organic connection to the natural world than with the sublimity of humanity's tiny scale compared to the enormity of the mountain. That is, rather than positing a physical connection between the human world of the camp and the natural world of the mountains, the photographs underscore a kind of distance between them. In Figure 6, the horizontal spread of the barracks marks the outer boundaries of the camp, which outlines the natural boundaries of the desert horizon. Indeed, the central road that runs perpendicular to the barracks leads to the photograph's vanishing point that sits under the mountains. Figure 7 similarly plays with horizontal and vertical lines. The neat diagonal columns of row crops spread horizontally across the lower and middle registers of the picture plane. Yet, they do not extend upward; they are notably cut off by the road and the dessert horizon. In this way, both photographs emphasize the insurmountable physical distance of the mountains from the human world of the camps.

Additionally, the photographs stress the difference in scale between the natural world of the mountains and the human world of the camps. This is most evident in Figure 6 as the human figures are mere dots with hardly any recognizable human form. In this way, the photographs suggest that the mountains come not only to dwarf human actors and built

environments, but they also are removed from the reach of human activity altogether. Yet, the reverse cannot be said. If the human world cannot touch the mountain, the sheer size of the mountains overcomes the distance from the human world. The mountains themselves thus lord over the camps from on high with their line of sight, watching imperiously the tiny actions of humans below.

Though the mountains may be beyond the reach of human labor, they are not beyond the reach of aesthetic contemplation. Hence, the mountains or rather the mountains' positionality take center stage, more so than the camps themselves. Indeed, the vertical and diagonal lines of the photographs (e.g. the road in Figure 6 and the crop rows in Figure 7) do not simply direct the viewer's gaze toward the mountains; they specifically direct it to their highest peak. Thus, like *Born Free*'s portraits, the mountains are not only a natural aesthetic object to behold, but they are also an aesthetic positionality from which to imagine. As an aesthetic positionality, the mountains offer a temporal frame to understand the national significance of the camps. This notion is best captured when Adams states

When all the occupants of Manzanar have resumed their places in the stream of American life, these flimsy buildings will vanish, the greens and flowers brought in to make life more understandable will wither, the old orchards will grow older, remnants of paths, foundations and terracing will gradually blend in the stable texture of the desert. The stone shells of the gateways and the shaft of the cemetery monument will assume the dignity of desert ruins; the wind will move over the land and the snow fall upon it; the hot summer sun will nourish the gray sage and shimmer in the gullies. Yet we know that the human challenge of Manzanar will rise insistently over all of America—and America cannot deny its tremendous implications. 57

Here, Adams implicitly analogizes Japanese American re-entry into the "stream of American life" with the disappearance of the built environment and the resurgence of natural wildlife, in that both are supposed to be the return to the natural order of things. 58 Yet, given Adams's final line, it would be inaccurate to claim that the Manzanar simply fades away to be forgotten. Its "human challenge" holds "tremendous implications" for the US. $\frac{59}{}$ Clearly, the challenge is the democratic contradiction of the political and social inequality of race. Thus, the passage points to two distinct temporal framings of Manzanar. The first suggests that Manzanar is fundamentally anomalous to the natural course of things. Or, in Adams's words, Manzanar is just a "detour on the road" to "citizenship" for the Japanese American. 60 The second implies the opposite social and temporal condition; Manzanar is representative of, and thus marks a turning point in, the course of things. The United States' response to the challenge of Manzanar will serve as the template to respond to the endemic problem of race in the nation. Or, as Adams states, "The treatment of the Japanese American will be a symbol of our treatment of all minorities."61 These contradictory socio-temporal interpretations can be reconciled only by offering a transcendent position that stands outside of them. Enter the mountains. For Adams, their sublimity does not only come from their physical size, but also from their very durability. Indeed, throughout Born Free, Adams contrasts the permanence of the mountains with the transience of the camps. From their transcendent geo-historical viewpoint, the contradictory temporal views of Manzanar are resolved as an episode in the spasmodic movement of national progress. As Adams writes, "At Manzanar, in the presence of the ancient mountains, another tragic episode of history struggles for solution."62

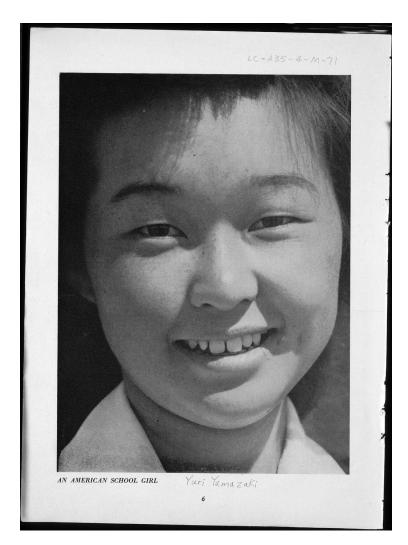


Figure 8: A portrait of Yuri Yamazaki.

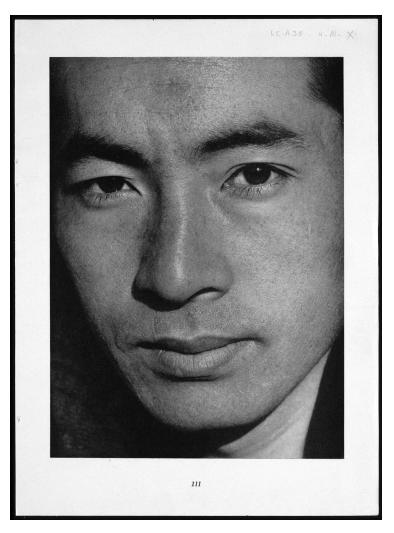


Figure 9: A portrait of Yuichi Hirata.

When taken together, Born Free's portraits and landscapes form two halves of the same scene of aesthetic contemplation. The Japanese body faces not just the viewer directly but also reverentially upward to the mountain. In turn, the mountains are imputed their own line of sight, magisterially peering to the Japanese American onlooker. They thus posit a transcendent position beyond the human scene of the camps, for which the Japanese body simultaneously looks upon and embodies itself through its visual identity with the mountains. Furthermore, the viewer is also invited to identify with the incarcerated Japanese Americans through their shared activity of looking. That is, the incarcerated Japanese Americans look at the mountain; the viewer looks at the photographs. Yet, more than this, the appeal is reinforced further since strewn intermittently throughout Born Free are two-page spreads of mountains set in the backdrop of an expansive sky. Thus, the viewer is tied to incarcerated Japanese Americans not simply by the act of looking but by the act of looking at the sublimity of frontier nature. Taken together, the visual grammar of Born Free (i.e. the way the photographs collectively direct a recognition of the mutual experience of the natural sublime between incarcerated Japanese Americans) enables the cultural and political recognition of not only a new national personage—the Japanese American—but the Unites States' national character as racially democratic.

Conclusion

Born Free ends with a portrait that is perhaps the clearest expression of this mid-century US racial liberal structure of feeling (Figure 9).63 Unlike nearly all other portraits, the last is an extreme close-up of the face. The hairline and neck are practically cropped out.

Importantly, it is shot at eye level. Thus, the viewer is no longer reverentially positioned below; instead, the viewer is made to directly face the subject, Hirata. His facial expression, moreover, is ambiguous. Unlike prior portraits, he is not inviting the viewer with a smile. He is also not disabusing the viewer with anger. Instead, the portrait frames Hirata to be intensely staring at the viewers, piercing them with his eyes.

Symbolically, then, the final portrait operates quite differently from the rest. All the photographs, portraits, and landscapes alike sought to normalize the Japanese American for the viewer. On the one hand, they straightforwardly enfolded the Japanese body into recognizable visual categories of Americanness. On the other hand, as I have argued, their visual grammar sought to transform those visual categories into a liberal democratic vision through appeals to the sublimity of frontier nature. The final portrait, on the other hand, does not prompt recognition; it demands more from the viewer. Though not expressed in anger, Hirata's gaze is a call for responsibility—not as an indictment for culpability but as an imperative to respond with political action.

In this regard, then, the final portrait is less a break from the prior photographs than their culmination. Indeed, as historian Jasmine Alinder notes, Adams was purposeful in the ordering of the images, especially with this closing portrait of Yuichi Hirata. ⁶⁴ Part of this ordering is the way that work becomes an organizing rubric since many of the portraits are grouped together by profession. But another one has been a developmental structure. As noted before, the initial portraits are of young girls, and, as the booklet proceeds, the portraits shift to mainly adult men. Such development linkage is reinforced further since the first portrait of Yuri Yamazaki has the same formal composition as the final one (Figure 8). ⁶⁵ In so doing, the portrait of Harata marks the narrative entry of the Japanese American as a moral-political agent in *Born Free*, one who is not simply recognized but who can now act morally and politically to press rights claims. Ideologically, however, the stakes of the portrait's moral and political demand is not so much the well-being of Japanese Americans or the historical injustice of their wartime incarceration, but the future of the US as a racially liberal democratic society that can take moral leadership in the unfolding postcolonial order of the American Century.

Notes

- US Office of War Information-Bureau of Motion Pictures, Japanese Relocation
 (Washington: War Activities Committee of the Motion Picture Industry, 1942), Film.
- 2. US Office of War Information-Bureau of Motion Pictures, *Japanese Relocation*. As historian Roger Daniels points out, incarceration is a better term than internment to describe what happened to West Coast Japanese Americans in 1942 since the vast majority were US citizens. Roger Daniels, "Words Do Matter: A Note on Inappropriate Terminology and the Incarceration of Japanese Americans," in *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Louis Fiset and Gail Nomura (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2005), 190–214. Also, for clarification, when discussing the historical people who were incarcerated, I will refer to them as "people of Japanese descent" due to their varied citizenship status and historically complicated self-identification. When discussing their visual representation, I will refer to them as "Japanese Americans"
- 3. US Office of War Information-Bureau of Motion Pictures, *Japanese Relocation*. 2
- 4. US Office of War Information-Bureau of Motion Pictures, *Japanese Relocation*. 2
- 5. US Office of War Information-Bureau of Motion Pictures, *Japanese Relocation*.

- 6. US Office of War Information-Bureau of Motion Pictures, Japanese Relocation.
- 7. US Office of War Information-Bureau of Motion Pictures, *Japanese Relocation*.
- 8. As historian Greg Grandin observes, the term "frontier" diverged from the term "border" by the end of the nineteenth century. Rather than a fixed geographical line, frontier "suggest{ed} a cultural zone or a civilizational struggle, a way of life" (116). In such a context, Frederick Jackson Turner's great contribution was "to embrace the unsettledness of the concept" by elaborating and multiplying the meanings of the frontier while, at same time, channeling them into a simple explanation of American development (116). Turner's account was so compelling that it achieved common sense in not only elite circles, but also in the US public sphere at large. For more, see Greg Grandin, *The End of the Myth: From the Frontier to the Border Wall in the Mind of America* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 2019), 116..
- 9. US Office of War Information-Bureau of Motion Pictures, *Japanese Relocation*.
- 10. Ansel Adams, Born Free and Equal: Photographs of Loyal Japanese-Americans at Manzanar Relocation Center, Inyo County, California (New York, NY: US Camera, 1944).
- 11. The reverential and magisterial gaze refers to opposing visual tropes and compositional orders that have shaped the landscape tradition of northern Europe and the US, respectively. In the reverential gaze, the implied line of sight moves up, whereas, in the magisterial gaze, the line of sight moves down. Boime reads these visual tropes to index different ideological formations. For more, see Albert Boime, *The Magisterial Gaze: Manifest Destiny and American Landscape Painting 1830–1865* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 20–23.
- 12. Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1977), 128–135. "Structure of feeling" comes from Raymond Williams to describe an inchoate and pre-semantic formation.
- 13. My argument aligns with others in Asian-American studies that have noted the role that discourses about Asia and Asian-Americans play in mid-century US visions of an integrated Pacific world. Colleen Lye, *America's Asia: Racial Form and American Literature, 1893–1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005) and Christine Hong, "Illustrating the Postwar Peace: Miné Okubo, the 'Citizen-Subject' of Japan, and *Fortune* Magazine," *American Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (March 2015): 105–140.
- 14. Racial liberalism describes an official US anti-racist discourse and ideology that became dominant in the middle of the twentieth century. Under a racial liberal view, racism is fundamentally understood as a psychological and moral issue of white prejudice deracinated from the history and organization of social, political, and economic life in the US. Its cultural and political ascendency was keenly tied to the global political and economic dominance of the US after WWII. Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism*. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).
- 15. For a comparative analysis of US and Japanese imperial formations in the Pacific during World War II, see Takashi Fujitani, *Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans during World War II* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2011).
- 16. Daniel Immerwahr, "How the US has Hidden its Empire," *The Guardian*, February 15, 2019.

- 17. For a brilliant theorization of the way that the national incorporation of Japanese Americans draw them into the project of native erasure, see Jodi Byrd, "Killing States: Removals, Other Americans, and the 'Pale Promise of Democracy," in *Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism*, (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 185–220. For an account of the Leupp Isolation Center, see Lynne Horiuchi, "Spatial Jurisdiction, Historical Topographies, and Sovereignty at the Leupp Isolation Center," *Amerasia* 42, no. 1 (2016): 82–101. For an account of the Gila River Indian Community, see Karen J. Leong and Myla Vicenti Carpio, "Carceral Subjugations: Gila River Indian Community and Incarceration of Japanese Americans on Its Lands," *Amerasia* 42, no. 1 (2016): 103–120.
- 18. Goldstein, *Formations*, 14.
- 19. Goldstein, *Formations*, 15.
- 20. Goldstein, Formations, 16. 2
- 21. Goldstein, *Formations*, 16.
- 22. Goldstein, Formations, 16. 2
- 23. For an extended account on African American's view of Japan and China during World War II, see George Lipsitz, "Frantic to Join... the Japanese Army': Black Soldiers and Civilians Confront the Asia-Pacific War," in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*, ed. Takashi Fujitani, Geoffrey White, and Lisa Yoneyama (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 347–377.
- 24. Jasmine Alinder, *Moving Images: Photography and the Japanese American Incarceration* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009).
- 25. See Linda Gordon and Gary Okihiro, eds., *Impounded: Dorothea Lange and the Censored Images of Japanese American Internment* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008).
- 26. W. J. T. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," in *Landscape and Power*, 2nd Edition, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2002), 14.
- 27. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," 14. 2
- 28. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," 17. 2
- 29. Yet, as Day notes, such logics rests on a triangular relation of Native, Settler, and Alien positionality. For a fuller elaboration, see Iyko Day, *Alien Capital: Asian Racialization and the Logic of Settler Colonial Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 73−114.

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- 30. Boime, *The Magisterial Gaze*, 21.
- 31. Boime, *The Magisterial Gaze*, 5. At this point, Boime's argument on the deep ideological linkage between US landscape and (settler) colonial practice is uncontroversial. Indeed, textbook accounts of US landscape paintings regularly point to their connection with the manifest destiny of the frontier. Yet, accounts of the US imperial landscape have rarely move beyond the nineteenth century. In large part, this truncated history has to do with the decline in landscape painting.

 Landscape, however, did not disappear from US visual culture in the twentieth century. Rather, as Mitchell notes, the rise of modernism displaced landscape from its central position in fine art, but its conventions penetrated mass visual culture to such an extent that landscape achieved the status of visual common sense.

 Landscape hence became ubiquitous, the ephemera of mass visual culture like advertisements, postcards, and amateur art. In this article, part of my aim is to extend this history into the twentieth century.

- 32. Alinder, Moving Images, 45–52. 🔁
- 33. Alinder also finds a pioneer subtext to *Born Free*. However, she reads it as way of framing the post-interment dispersal of Japanese American to the East. For such a reading, see Alinder, *Moving Images*, 64−66.

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- 34. Elena Tajima Creef, *Imaging Japanese America: The Visual Construction of Citizenship, Nation, and the Body* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 36.
- 35. Creef, *Imaging Japanese America*, 36. \triangleright
- 36. Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner: "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" and Other Essays, ed. John Mack Faragher (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 33.
- 37. See Creef, *Imaging Japanese America*, 13–70.
- 38. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 7-9.
- 39. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 7-9.
- 40. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 3. 2
- 41. Thy Phu, "The Spaces of Human Confinement: Manzanar Photography and Landscape Ideology," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 11, no. 3 (October 2008), 337–371.
- 42. Alinder, *Moving Images*, 46. In this sense, *Born Free* is less a break from Adams's longstanding concern over natural aesthetic than an opportunity to put this concern into social and political practice.
- 43. In this way, *Born Free* offers a useful counterpoint to Day's analysis of the landscape photography of Jin-me Yoon and Tseng Kwong Chi. For Day, Yoon's and Chi's landscape photography disidentifies with masculine white settler colonial personifications of land by parodying its visual convention as the backdrop to the "asiatic body." *Born Free*, on the other hand, illustrates how such a technique does not guarantee critique. Indeed, *Born Free* sets the asiatic body in nature in order to incorporate people of Japanese descent into the project of US colonialism.
- 44. For an account on the anti-Japanese racist visual culture at the time, see Creef, *Imaging Japanese America*; Linda Gordon and Gary Okihiro, introduction to *Impounded*, 1–10; Alinder, *Moving Images*, 52–55; and Katherine Stanutz, "Inscrutable Grief: Memorializing Japanese American Internment in Miné Okubo's Citizen 13660," *American Studies* 56, no. 3 (2018): 47–68. ▶
- 45. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 23; 30; 59.
- 46. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 112.
- 47. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 112. 2
- 48. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 112. 2
- 49. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 112.
- 50. Phu, "The Spaces of Human Confinement," 355.
- 51. Deborah Bright, "The Machine in the Garden Revisited: American Environmentalism and Photographic Aesthetics," *Art Journal* (Summer 1992): 62.
- 52. Bright, "The Machine in the Garden Revisited," 62. 2
- 53. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 9. 2
- 54. Middle-class whiteness has long characterized notions of pristine nature in general and mountains in particular in US racial imaginaries. For a more general account on the relation of whiteness and mountains, see Richard Dyer, *White: Essays on Race*

and Culture (London: Routledge, 1997). For an account on the US relation of middleclass whiteness and landscape, see Martin A Berger, Sight Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture (Berkeley: University of California, 2005); Alexandra Minna Stern, Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America (Berkeley: University of California, 2016).

- 55. Adams, *Born Free and Equal*, 26–26; 82–83.
- 56. Phu, "The Spaces of Human Confinement," 334.
- 57. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 25–29.
- 58. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 25.
- 59. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 29.
- 60. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 25.
- 61. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 104.
- 62. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 22. 2
- 63. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 111. 2
- 64. Alinder, Moving Images, 71. 2
- 65. Adams, Born Free and Equal, 6. 2



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Producing Art in the Ruins of a Former Colonial Industrial Hub: Arts Practices in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe (2000–2017)

Khanyile Mlotshwa

ABSTRACT This paper, focusing on Bulawayo, the country's second largest city and regarded as the country's cultural capital city, seeks to critically interrogate the working conditions of creative artists and other content producers against the background of an imploding cultural landscape. The paper seeks to establish ways in which cultural workers in Bulawayo negotiate the "precarious conditions" under which they work as they are exposed to the informalization of their labour, wage squeezes, temporariness, uncertainty, and pernicious risks in their work (Standing 2011; 2014; Waite, 2008; Munck, 2011). Artists in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city and the country's former industrial hub, face a harsh operating environment such that some have even quit their craft. Some of the artists interviewed have concluded that their (bare) lives are more important than the preoccupation of producing art as this has had a toll on their families. However, there still exists a handful of artists who continue to struggle against all odds with the hope of building a sustainable arts industry in the country's second largest city.

Introduction

As the Zimbabwean economy gradually fell apart in the 2000s, there has been a parallel disintegration of arts institutions. The failure of the economy has altered the working conditions for artists and other content producers in Zimbabwe. Focusing on Bulawayo, the country's second largest city that is regarded as the country's cultural capital city, this paper has two main objectives. Using data from qualitative interviews with eight artists, the paper seeks firstly to interrogate the working conditions of artists against the background of an imploding cultural landscape. Second, the paper aims to establish ways in which these cultural workers negotiate the "precarious conditions" under which they work as they are exposed to the informalization of their labor, wage squeezes, temporariness, uncertainty, and pernicious risks in their work. 1

In this article, I first lay the contextual background by proffering the history of the development of arts in Bulawayo. This history of arts is discussed in the context of the city's history as a colonial industrial hub. The paper then moves to discuss Zimbabwe's economic meltdown at the turn of the century in 2000. Here, the paper considers the debate on whether the economic meltdown was caused by the land reform program of the early 2000s or by sanctions imposed on the country after the land reform program. The next section discusses the theoretical issues around alienation and precarity. Here I consider the relationship between precarity, as espoused by Guy Standing, and the classic concept of alienation, as proffered by Marx and his intellectual followers. I also consider a postcolonial view on precarity offered by Ronaldo Munck. The larger part of the paper discusses the thematic issues that emerge out of in-depth interviews with the eight

Colonial Heritage, Arts, and the History of Precarization in Bulawayo

In his award winning play, *Nansi Le Ndoda* (Here Is the Man) produced and performed in 1985, Zimbabwe's renowned playwright, director, and producer, Cont Mhlanga, tells a story of corruption, greed, and hyperinflation. The play also tackles "such and negative tendencies as [...] nepotism, bribery and sexual harassment at places of work and regionalism in independent Zimbabwe." At the time the play was performed for the first time, it spoke to the conscience of the nation and won five awards at the National Theatre Organisation (NTO) annual awards in 1985. Among its many outstanding scenes, one stands out for its prophetic power. The lead character comes home in the evening from job hunting after his boss dismisses him from the job he held at the beginning of the play. His young brother tells him that they have run out of meal mealie, sugar, salt, and other foodstuff in the house. The young brother makes his report in instalments, mentioning each item on its own. The mention of each item comes across as a blow to the brother who can only make wincing sounds and holds his head in both his hands as if to bear the pain of it all.

This scene could have played out in some working class households as early as the 1980s when the play first produced. However, in a bigger way, the scene played out in almost every working class and middle class household starting in 1999 right through to 2008 when Zimbabwe's hyperinflation hit the ceiling, totally collapsing the economy. In 1999, the Zimbabwean dollar lost value on what economists called Black Friday, and in 2008 inflation went out of control. As a result, the government was compelled to demonetize the Zimbabwean currency, the dollar, in 2009. The playwright, Mhlanga had foreseen this drama playing out even at a time that most Zimbabweans regard as the golden era of the country's independence. It was possible for Mhlanga to see this, not necessarily because artists are seers who can peer into the future, but because of his positioning in the townships and subjectivation as working class. The French Marxist Louis Althusser posits that for Karl Marx to be able to write convincingly on the proletariat, he had to abandon his bourgeois and petty-bourgeois positions "and adopt the class positions of the proletariat." Althusser raises this point to emphasize the need to theorize from the conditions and the level of the oppressed. He privileges the position of the proletariat as the site for theory, a position "to see and analyse the mechanisms of a class society and therefore to produce a scientific knowledge of it." I argue in this paper that to produce such important art, to speak to the challenges of the working class from the mid-1980s to the current period of Zimbabwean history, Mhlanga had to be located in the trenches and the barricades where the working class struggles to survive. By extension, I locate the majority of the artists in Bulawayo in the working class category, those who are alienated from their labor and are mostly located in the townships of this city that emerges as a colonial industrial space. It is important to sketch a history of Bulawayo to properly illuminate the context in which these artists work.

Morden resembles the ruins of an industrial town with most factories in its Belmont industrial area closed down. The country's second largest city emerged in the 1940s as an industrial city central to the colonial economy of Rhodesia, a British colony. In 2014, a columnist in the state media brought the continuing coloniality of the city into focus. The Bulawayo City Council (BCC) held an elaborate function to celebrate the 120th anniversary of Bulawayo as a city, and *The Herald* columnist Nathaniel Manheru quickly pointed out how the city authorities had fallen into the colonial trap. After narrating how history has been falsified, Manheru describes the commemorations as an, "unfortunate decision to commemorate Bulawayo purportedly as "a modern city." He pointed out that such a colonial approach to history is only possible because we have failed to learn "how

to relate to colonial narratives." The columnist's argument echoes the warning of decolonial theorists for people in the Global South to be vigilant against an uncritical celebration of modernity and coloniality. Bulawayo's long history as an industrial capital, founded by Dr. Leander Starr Jameson, a leading member of the colonizing British South Africa Company (BSAC) on June 1, 1894, is part of its colonial legacy. This is despite the fact that Bulawayo has existed prior to colonization, built by Africans, that even colonial narratives point to the city as, "a massive, ever expanding conurbation with a cosmopolitan character, both tribally and racially, by the time it is set upon by the imperialists in 1893, in fact from the days of its Founder King, Mzilikazi." The "modern" colonial city was established on the ruins of the throne of Lobengula Khumalo, the last Ndebele king, deposed in a series of the BSAC conquest battles in November and December of 1893. The town attained city status in 1943. Over the years, the city grew as an industrial city and an economic hub in southern Africa, and it was the second city in Africa to have its own stock exchange and one of the only two in Africa until the 1970s. The development of Bulawayo as a colonial industrial hub is linked to the subjectivation of black people, especially men, as wage laborers. Once set up as a city and an industrial hub, the settlers had to import labor, usually males, from the Ndebele villages around and other locations like Mashonaland (Northern region of what was to become Southern Rhodesia and Zimbabwe), Zambia, and Malawi. Over the years, it became law that black people could only be in the city if they had a job. As a result, Bulawayo as a colonial city excluded black women and admitted black men on the contract that they were industrial laborers. As shall be discussed later, this marked the beginning of the alienation of black people by separating them from land. Conquest and land dispossessions preceded this subjectivation of black Africans as industrial labourers.

The history of black theater in Bulawayo lies in the contrasting spaces: that of the middle class of the black intelligentsia and that of the township working class. The Mthwakazi Association of Writers and Actors (MAWA), with such notable figures as Felix Moyo and Mthandazo Ndema Ngwenya, was a group made up of mostly teachers with love for their black heritage. Amakhosi started as a Dragons Karate Club until Cont Mhlanga attended theater workshops by the National Theatre Organisation (NTO) starting in 1980 at Stanley Hall in Makokoba. The group changed from Dragons Karate Club to Amakhosi Theatre in 1981. By 1990, Amakhosi Theatre, made up of 110 young people, had appeared on stage more than 295 times. 10 Its mission was to "take theater to ordinary people." 11 In that the post-independence history of black theatre in Bulawayo emerges out of working class spaces, it can be argued that it is entangled in the history of the city as a colonial industrial hub. Amakhosi Theatre became a pioneering arts group in the townships of Bulawayo, inspiring an explosion of similar arts groups that were made up mostly of young people whose parents worked in the then vibrant heavy industries of Bulawayo. Mhlanga and his pioneering Amakhosi Theatre became a movement that inspired the appearance of a number of arts groups formed by young people in townships and other spaces like schools and small towns. This artistic prowess was at a time when the city of Bulawayo was economically alive and its industries employed armies of young and old people.

The city's falling apart in the late 1990s and early 2000s, pushing many of its inhabitants including the artists discussed in this paper into poverty, coincided with the global crisis of capitalism. Importantly, it marked Zimbabwe's own economic decline, the cause of which is debated, as discussed in the next section. The Ndebele people fondly call Bulawayo *KoNtuthuziyathunqa*, meaning "a place that continually exudes smoke." This was in reference to the city's big heavy industries that made it the center of industry and manufacturing in Zimbabwe and Southern Africa. A local newspaper editorial has summed up the situation in Bulawayo today in these words: "vacant factories, dilapidated

buildings, empty shops and massive unemployment all bear testimony of how the mighty city has fallen." ¹² According to newspapers, nearly one hundred companies have closed down in this city since 2010, putting an estimated twenty thousand workers out of work, with the remaining companies scaling down their operations. The Master of High Court's roll reveals that scores of companies are applying for judicial management, voluntary closure and liquidation. ¹³ This could be the crashing down of the capitalist system.

From the vantage point of his location in the township environment, Cont Mhlanga could observe the suffering that had already hit working class families, something that MAWA from their middle-class cushions could not see. In a sense, Mhlanga and his group could already understand the meaning of precarity. Mhlanga's Amakhosi movement came at a time when artists were mostly viewed as people who had failed in life and therefore could do nothing except drama. It was at a time when the occupation of a performing artist was stigmatized as not work, in the sense of the work of a nurse or a teacher. In a sense, as popular art appeared in Bulawayo, the artists already had the label of being *waste*, a *precariat* and the *disposable*. In some cases, artists have been compelled to produce art or perform work for those who have resources like rich individuals and companies. In these cases, these artists are alienated from this work. It is work that they produce but the work turns around to undermine them. For instance, art commissioned by companies always has the ideological effect of keeping the class organization intact.

Zimbabwe's Economic Meltdown: Land Reform, Sanctions and the Global Economy

As I have already hinted, the death of Bulawayo's industries happened in the context of Zimbabwe's economic meltdown at the turn of the century. Starting in the period from late 1999 to the early 2000s, Zimbabwe experienced tough economic conditions characterized by high prices, shortages of goods in supermarkets, increasing unemployment, and currency challenges as a result of inflation forcing the government to ditch the official currency and adopt a multicurrency regime by 2009. Helliker has noted that the debate over land reform in Zimbabwe has been polarized into two positions: the majority position that the program affected production and compromised food security, and the minority position that the restructuring of the agrarian sector opened up opportunities for small-scale black farmers. 14 Whichever was the cause of the financial crises, the land reform or the sanctions, the crisis pushed many working-class people into poverty. Most artists come from the working class.

The land reform program must be understood in the context of history. If the development of industries in Bulawayo and subjectivation of black people as industrial labourers is linked to the land dispossession of 1890 in Mashonaland and 1893 in Matabeleland, the land reform program in the early 2000s was meant to reverse this history. Land dispossession and the alienation it caused for black people was perpetuated in the colonial Rhodesian years as black people were turned into factory laborers. However, the land reform program became a backdrop to Zimbabwe's domestic financial crisis when economic mismanagement and greed from the elites combined with the sanctions to crush the economy. Moyo argues that the popular idea that Zimbabwe's land reform was a failure is wrong in that, since the program aimed at redistribution, that was achieved in a large scale. 15 He argues, "this is despite some elites having benefitted from the process and foreign owned agro-industrial estates and conservancies being retained."16 In another article, Moyo posits that the land reform altered agrarian relations in that it broadened the "producer and consumption base." 17 Paradoxically it "fuelled new inequities in access to land and farm input and output markets." 18 Murisa has argued that the greatest threat to land reform has been "the threat of elite capture." 19

The sanctions that Western powers including the United Kingdom, the United States, and Europe imposed on Zimbabwe, especially the country's elites, after the land reform program have been discussed by scholars and government officials in relation to the global economy architecture. The government of Zimbabwe has argued that the sanctions have effectively rendered the country's economy redundant in that the country could not effectively trade with other nations. The government has gone further to characterize sanctions as part of the tools that strong and powerful Western countries have in their neocolonial toolboxes to punish and discipline the Global South. This is seen as continuing despite claims of independence for the formerly colonized world. Foster summarizes critical political economist Samir Amin's observation that the decentralization of the global economic system to the periphery, marking the industrialization of the Global South, "was not accompanied by a corresponding shift in the political control of the mechanisms of production and exchange."²⁰ Foster argues that, despite this centralisation, the "globalised monopoly capital headquartered in the centre" retained the "strategic imperialist control over accumulation." 21 As a result of this economic inequalities between nations of the Global South and those of the Global North, Amin argues that "Third World industrialisation will not, therefore, put an end to the polarisation inherent in actually existing world capitalism." 22 Amin emphasises the role of the Bretton Woods institutions—notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank—in the global economy. 23 He argues that these institutions have been charged with the purpose of ensuring that the economies of the South and the East are subordinated to the global economy imperatives. 24

Sanctions have affected artists in Zimbabwe, in general, and in Bulawayo, in particular, in a number of ways. First, the sanctions paradoxically created a situation where there was a lot of money from Western funders, which include embassies and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), for specific kinds of art and absolutely no funding for artistic themes seen as not advancing the global economic imperatives. This meant that artists were disciplined to produce art that speaks to prescribed themes, not necessarily art that sprung from their inspiration. Importantly, as audiences became poor and could not afford art, a large number of artists had to do without any form of funding. Because embassies and NGOs are centralized in Harare, artists from outside the capital city were most affected by this poverty in the country.

Alienation, Precarity, Precarization and Precariousness

From a theoretical perspective, this paper considers artists operating in Bulawayo as precariats and as alienated. Standing has noted that the middle class has splintered into two groups: the *salariat*, who are the employed, waged with non-wage forms of remuneration, and the *proficians*, who include small business people and entrepreneurs. Standing further notes that there is an emerging class that he calls the *precariat*, who work "flexible" hours, mostly in temporary jobs, are "casuals," or part-timers. However, Munck strongly disagrees, arguing that the so-called precariat is genealogically located in the history of marginality, informality, and social exclusion, and, especially in the Global South, it is not anything new. For Munck, the modern concept of precariat "misunderstands the complexity of class making and remaking and [...] acts as a colonising concept in the South in classic Eurocentric mode. This paper deploys these different readings of precarity alongside the classic Marxist concept of alienation in understanding how artists in Bulawayo make art under conditions of a failed economy.

Alienation has been described the "condition of modern man" and an "endemic condition of capitalism" characterized by a "morbid and acute social sickness." Marx posits that alienation is linked to private property and law. The reified laws of private property arise

"out of the nature of private property." 30 Workers are alienated from the labor of their minds and hands as they are viewed "just like a horse" needing "only [to] receive so much as enables him to work." 31 To Marx, under the alienating capitalist conditions, the worker feels that work is external to her and consequently get no fulfillment out of it, lacks physical and mental energy, and "is physically exhausted and mentally debased." 32 Alienation ties the worker to private property and to the capitalist in that, through alienation, private property overdetermines relations between people. It is "therefore, the product, the necessary result, of alienated labour, of the external relation of the worker to nature and himself." 33

Marxists consider alienation as born out of the historical condition of capitalism, "the innermost constitution of class society." 34 However, while Novack and Marx, writing from the West, separate slavery and capitalism, it has been argued that slavery and colonization of the Carribean in 1492 marked the beginning of capitalism. 35 This paper, focusing on a Global South country and location, adopts this decolonial position.

Mandel traces Marx's earlier work around alienation as not focusing on economic alienation but "the alienation of man as a citizen in his relationship with the state." 36 The people of Matabeleland, where most of these artists hail from, feel alienated from the state in a number of ways. All this is tied the question of their citizenship. While in the case of Marx the state was seen as not representing collective interests but those who own property, in Zimbabwe, for the people of Matabeleland, the state is a tribal creation that acts in defense of sectarian ethnic interests while oppressing those viewed as belonging to minority ethnic groups. Surrendering their individual rights to the state is seen as giving up their rights to "institutions [which are] in reality hostile to them." 37 Second, Mandel emphasizes the separation of people from the means of production as the first basis of economic alienation. 38 The basic means of production is land. Land, even in Europe, has been a public common, freely available, but at some point in history, it became private property as people were driven from large tracts of land. Mandel notes that land dispossessions in Europe are the starting point for any theory of alienation as it gave birth to the institution of wage labour. ³⁹ This is also true in terms of the history of colonialism, land dispossession, industrialization. and the emergence of wage labor system in industries in Matabeleland, as discussed in the previous section.

The precariat is the modern alienated individual. Alienation is characterized by exploitation. The precariat is exploited in that they mostly do work that is counted as preparation and is largely unpaid, lack employment benefits such as pensions, paid holidays and medical coverage, among other benefits. 40 As a result of this, the precariat is heavily indebted as their wages are volatile such that "they live on the edge of unsustainable debt and in chronic economic uncertainty." 41 Standing argued that the precariat, as a class in the making, comprised of three factions. 42 First, there are those who have fallen into this category from old working class families; second, there are migrants and ethnic minorities who lack rights tied to citizenship and the state; third are the educated, mostly young people, and old salariats who feel the next generation of their families will be precariats. 43 Like Marxists, Standing believes that the alienated precariats embody political agency and could be "the vanguard of a new progressive era." 44

While Munck agrees that globalization has "increased the precarious and insecure nature of most work," he is, however, adamant that the precariat is not a class at all. 45 He notes that what is mischaracterized as the precariat, a new class, describes "a certain phase of Europe's post-Fordist working class history." 46 This is because the relationships in the production of capitalism have not changed in any way. In the Global South, Munck posits that this phase of capitalism "is marked by the nature of the postcolonial state and, later,

by the developmental state where this has emerged." 47 In the Global South, what Standing characterizes as limited forms of citizenship, the denizens, Munck argues, "have been in existence for a long time in the fraught relations between workers, the state and society in the South." 48

In-depth Interviews and Seeking to Understand the "Other" Experiences

The research is largely qualitative and uses qualitative interviews to collect data that is analyzed through a range of textual analysis methods that include narrative analysis and critical discourse analysis. The qualitative interview is seen as a "most efficient and efficacious method for generating texts about the experiences of the people who do not themselves and on their own produce such texts." 49 A qualitative interview is a dialogue between the researcher and the interviewee. For this paper, I interviewed eight artists practicing their craft in theater, film, music, and arts administration in Bulawayo. Among the artists interviewed, one is a musician and music producer, one is a photographer and playwright, a playwright and director, a poet and an actor, two are playwrights and filmmakers, and one is an arts administrator. These artists were theoretically or purposively sampled, targeting those who would yield good information and were available for interviews. However, largely the interviewees were selected with the aim to get a sample of interviewees who will yield relevant data. 50 While care was taken to sample across arts genres, the broader aim has not necessarily been to build a representative sampling frame but to put together a sampling frame that is "illustrative of broader social and cultural processes" [Xlix] around the way artists negotiate precarity in the arts industry in Bulawayo. 51 Initially female artists were not available, as they have to rehearse the whole day and then get back home to take up household chores such as cooking and nurturing their families. However, with time some of them were able to make time to talk. The artists interviewed are mostly from Bulawayo, as a region, and not necessarily Ndebele, and therefore no issues of ethnicity arise. This is because the research focuses on Bulawayo as a former industrial hub. Among the artists interviewed, five are male and four are female. The interviews yielded "rich, detailed descriptions" of the interviewees' experiences and narratives. 52 The transcribed data went up to over twenty pages of transcripts typed in Times New Roman, point 12, and single spaced. The transcripts were then subjected to a critical discourse analysis (CDA) to tease out themes and narratives. CDA combines theoretical observations on the social nature of language, its functions in contemporary society and close textual analysis as a form of "social and cultural analysis." 53 The study of the interviews transcripts grapples with "the circulation of meanings in society (which) includes next to language, social practices." 54 The researcher seeks to understand how artists negotiate precarity in their work, and the effect of their choice of language in describing their experiences. In Fairclough's model, the analysis of the communicative event focuses on the relationship between three dimensions, which are text, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice. The interviews are taken as communicative events here.

The Precarity of Arts Practice in Bulawayo

Actor and theater entrepreneur Mandla Moyo explicitly uses the word "exploitation" to describe the conditions under which artists work in Bulawayo. Here work refers to what the artists do, not to the idea that they are employed somewhere. Exploitation is where, as a result of asymmetrical power relations, "an actor or a category of actors uses others for their own ends." 55. This is a "moralistic" understanding of exploitation. Moyo notes that "ever since, til today, the artist fends for himself. We contribute a lot in the entertainment programs of this country but we do it under exploitation." 56 The phrase

"ever since" could be meant to make us look at this in a long and historic way, and "entertainment programs" refers to the cultural life of the country. His point is that for as long as arts history, in his case theater history, has been recorded, other people have appropriated the cultural value created by artists without any real benefit accruing to the artist. Moyo calls arts a "gamble."

In the Marxist sense, exploitation is the appropriation of another's surplus labor: "surplus labor is the amount of labour exceeding what is necessary for the reproduction of the worker's labour power, that is for producing the worker's living conditions sufficient for the worker's capability to keep working." Coupled with the complaints that the interviewed artists and journalists raised on their remuneration for their creative labor, it is clear that they view their conditions from both a moralistic and a Marxist understanding of exploitation. I start by discussing the understanding of their working conditions as one of exploitation.

Exploitation

The other artists may not explicitly use the words "exploitation" or "gamble," but in their conversations they describe conditions of exploitation. Musician Khulekani Bethule also sees the life of an artist as one of perpetual struggle and, specifically for artists in Bulawayo, it is because they have no audience. Since he attributes this lack of an audience to failure to get enough fair play on national radio stations, he believes that is likely to change, "now that two stations that promote local music have come in." What is key to Bethule is the struggle to build an audience, which he sees as thwarted by the economic and cultural organization of arts in the country that marginalizes artists in Matabeleland with radio stations previously centered in Harare. Playwright and theater director Raisedon Baya says artists "live for the day" or "live from hand to mouth." Bethule explains how this comes to light when an artist dies:

The honest truth is that it's no secret that most of us artists don't have ourselves covered. We have many artists who passed away because they couldn't afford buying medication for whatever diseases. There are cases where collections were done just to bury a departed artist. 59

Poet Bhekumusa Moyo is also frank on the situation of artists pointing out that "economically artists are just surviving. Nothing distinguishes them from taxi drivers." He however points out that artists have tried to negotiate this precarity by joining residents' burial societies where they live. This is a case of communing in practice.

Indebted

Artists have also pointed out that at times, "family money ends up covering art expenses." According to musician Khulekani Bethule,

Rehearsal space is usually hired, artists need transport to and from the rehearsal venue, and these days you buy electricity so as to rehearse unlike yesteryears when you could have electricity even without paying. Then there comes the critical part. That of getting paying gigs which is where money should come from. Remember I said marginalization has a big effect so the fact that this group is not known due to lack of exposure means no big promoter will consider them for good paying shows so they end up performing for peanuts in small bars. Band members will want to be paid so that they also support their families and at the end of the day there is nothing left to cover all the costs incurred.

Photographer Mgcini Nyoni says that as a survival strategy, and due to the precarity of their work, artists try by all means to avoid debt, especially around personal accounts. He downplays debt related to production arguing, "shows are put up using partnerships, so borrowing to put up a show is minimal." Baya tells of debts where some artists have failed to pay for public-address (PA) system's hire, transport, or the cost of producing posters, noting that "it is sad that some artists, at the end, have elected to close shop instead of incurring a lot of debts." Closing shop means quitting arts and taking up some other jobs. Mandla Moyo recounts how he left arts at some point to take up a job as a security guard. For other artists it means leaving the country entirely and joining the trek to South Africa.

However, in looking at the survival strategies that artists suggest, the idea of giving up on one's craft as a strategy to survive is shocking. This could be an instance where, in Berlant's view, "precarity is socialized into the intensification of" the work of living. 63 These artists' lives that, in an abstract manner, are more important than the work they do, and in practical terms they have to take care of their bodies and the life that lives in there before thinking about a life of producing art. This is a point that is emphasised by Lorey, that precarization is linked to biopolitics because it "designates not only working and living conditions but also ways of subjectivazation, embodiment, and therefore agency." 64

Higher Levels of Education, Poor Job Profiles

Arts have developed as space dominated by low education, characterized by poor skills training or knowledge transfers. However, there has been a recent growth of education around arts as the government opened new universities, especially after 1990. The University of Zimbabwe has been for a long time now offered a theater-related degree. Lupane State University, Midlands State University, and Great Zimbabwe University, among other institutions, are the new additions to institutions that offer training in arts at a higher level. These development have been coupled with Zimbabweans going out of the country for further training in these areas, especially at postgraduate level. This has led to high levels of education among artists, yet operating conditions have not changed in any way.

Artists interviewed still speak about putting talent ahead of training, education, and skills. Baya believes the kind of arts education at universities must be changed because "arts are not benefiting from these graduates" as they don't go into art. He suggests that "either they are teaching them wrong things at university or they are wrong candidates" and that "something has to be seriously done here." This point is also raised by photographer, Mgcini Nyoni, who argues that

There is also the issue of people who are supposed to be in other professions but are in the arts become they can't find jobs in their preferred professions. Those think art is an easy way out and are a hindrance to the arts as their (low) passion and commitment levels are detrimental to the arts.

It is clear that these artists value passion and love for arts over university qualifications. This is passion rooted in talent since to these artists, talent remains supreme and is driven by love for arts.

Weak Cultural Institutions

For arts, the struggle has been to build the institutions from scratch in the example of Amakhosi Township Square Cultural Centre in Makokoba, Inkundla Centre in Entumbane, Siyaya in Makokoba, and Inkululeko Yabatsha School of Arts (IYASA) in the city center (but rehearsing at a community hall in Entumbane). It is for this reason that, Mandla Moyo

does not see the revival of arts institutions as lying in individual brilliance but emphasizes unity among artists in building these institutions. He sees strong institutions coming into being in the unity of artists' commitment to work together, arguing that "arts institutions are there but we need to play brother help brother baba, meaning we as artists must help each other to rise and shine instead of sabotaging each other especially in Matabeleland." 67

Judith Butler has emphasized the need to think about precarity "as an acknowledgement of dependency, needs, exposure, and vulnerability." 68 Her idea is that life is precarious for all people and we depend on each other to live. This is the point that Mandla Moyo could be making, that on one's own it would be hard to build and maintain arts institutions.

The Challenges of Technology

In the qualitative interviews, artists were asked to speak on technology and their work and situation. Among artists, the tendency seems to be over optimistic about technology, the over-optimism that borders on determinism in some instances. Playwright, Raisedon Baya triumphantly points out that "most of our marketing is via social media" ⁶⁹ Here artists overlook the downside of this over-reliance on technology. First, while photographer Mgcini Nyoni believes there can be partnerships between artists and other professionals, and cites marketing as an example, overreliance on technology replaces the need for marketing professionals. Second, technology, especially social media, has created apathy in people reducing them to click "likes" and hearts but never attending shows. Third, overreliance on social media puts too much emphasis on making known, that is publicizing one's event, which is not necessarily selling it or ensuring that people get to attend. Issues of place in marketing the arts in Bulawayo are always overlooked as there are rarely quality shows in spaces that people can reach easily, close to where they live. This is where the creativity of a (marketing) professional is needed. Technologies are tools that still need to be deployed by a person.

However, photographer Mgcini Nyoni points to the complex relationship that artists have with technology:

Technology has both been a curse and a blessing to the arts. The mp3 format of music has made piracy very easy in the case of music and on the other hand it has made the process of being known shorter. It is the artist who can balance the tricky equation who makes it. Instead of artists organizing shows to release music, they send download links which are not monetized. 70

Musician Khulekani Bethule also sees technology as a double edged sword: "the introduction of technology has made it easier for artists to sell their art to the world but that's where piracy was born. As piracy infected the industry, major record labels/companies closed down." Piracy has been cited as a huge cancer in an industry where artists are already struggling to make ends meet. Artists calculate piracy as money lost.

Breakdown of the Donor-Centered Arts Funding Model

Mandla Moyo in his narrative traces the decline of arts on a path that is well mapped on the decline of the Zimbabwean economy:

When I began arts in 1991 with Amakhosi, things were fine. And I chose to do art as a profession, things seemed to be moving fine but there were some drastic changes in 1999 and the life of an artist was plunged in some ditch. 71

Moyo idealizes 1991, the time he started in the arts, maybe because we all idealize beginnings. For the Zimbabwean economy, the year 1991 marked the beginning of the neoliberal Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) that forced hundreds of workers out of work in Zimbabwe. The program was implemented from 1991 to 1995. Moyo may be blind to how 1999 and 2000, as a turning point in Zimbabwe's political economic make up, and later 2008, the year that marked the high point of hyperinflation, is foreshadowed in the moment of neoliberalization in 1991. In the same discussion Moyo talks of how, after 1999, artists from Bulawayo "were shut out of many programs including donor funding" and how "it became hard for us to get nominated for some award." Arts in Bulawayo have always been a donor-funded sector. It is hard to talk of a time when the arts have ever been self-sufficient. In that it has always been conceived on a business model that relies on charity from donors; the precarity of the arts industry in Bulawayo is therefore written in its genes. In the early 2000s, arts organizations had to compete with other civil society organizations for donor funds. In the period between 2000 and 2010, there has been donor fatigue in Zimbabwe and arts have been affected. The claim that if you are not in Harare it is hard to access donor funds is also made in civil society circles.

No Future Assurance

If anything marks the precarity of artists' working conditions, it is the fact that they have no medical aid, funeral policies, or retirement packages. However, photographer Mgcini Nyoni points out that "most Zimbabweans don't have medical aid, funeral policies, and retirement packages." This observation contextualizes the precarity of artists as "precarity within the general context of precarity." However, unlike fellow artists who see a solution in artists uniting and building an industry, Nyoni believes that is the job of the government. Here, he is gesturing towards a valid proposition that it is impossible for artists to build an industry in a context where there is no functional government" "institutions [...] crumble at the whims of politicians, and the country's natural resources are abused." However, it will also be a difficult task for artists to bring about the ideal government.

The Challenges of Being a Woman in Bulawayo Arts

The arts in Bulawayo, like in most spaces, are gendered. This means that for women artists, over and above the crushing economic challenges, they have to contend with patriarchy in the arts. This patriarchy is linked to the question of resources. Playwright, scriptwriter, and theater director, Thoko Zulu tells of how she was hounded out of heading the Intwasa Arts Festival. The Intwasa Arts festival is an annual international festival in the country's second largest city. She posits that "men feel challenged, creatively and intellectually, to deal with a woman in a position of power. That is why they got rid of me." According to Zulu's account, scarce resources are always at the center of these struggles. She said "they ganged up against me and fabricated stories creating a media frenzy that I had embezzled festival funds." The scarcity of resources in the arts space has exposed mostly women artists to rampant sexual harassment such that, even women in power, are not immune to this:

The fabricated stories came after I complained about what I felt was sexual harassment. A board member would call me every morning, asking about the color of my panties. At one point when I was in Harare for the Harare International Festival of the Arts (HIFA), another phoned me around 2:00 a.m. asking about the size of my bed. Male counterparts who were leading subsectors had no respect for me, treating me like a dog. They would come to the festival office and insult me. $\frac{74}{}$

The underrepresentation of women in terms of participation in the arts is linked to the fact that women are oppressed in society. Few families are keen on their girls participating in arts because such participation is seen as risky including exposure to physical and sexual harm. In that most performances are at night, it is always argued that it is not a good time for a young woman to be away from the safety of home. One needs to have access to resources to ensure their safety. For example, they would need money to pay for a metered taxi as emergency taxis, the most common and affordable form of transport, are not safe—or they should have their own car. In most cases, well-funded arts events have been reduced into elitist spaces accessible to people who own cars and have dependable transport when the show ends around or close to midnight. Artists, especially young girls, are seen as exposed to abuse by producers, directors, arts funders, and even male members of the audiences.

Arts administrator Cynthia Mutandi notes that the economic challenges and patriarchal tendencies in arts have meant that there has always been a low turnout in terms of women artists' participation in arts. She notes that this is despite the fact that some of the arts events, such as the Intwasa Festival, that she manages, tries to create a conducive environment for female artists to showcase their work. This underlies how patriarchy operates in that it structures society is such a way that even though women are the majority in any society, they become a minority in participating in public spaces such as arts. This is tied to hegemonic masculinity, where men are given a sense of entitlement, which means they can access the public space without the hindrances that women have to contend with. Most of the time, men can access the public space because they can access resources that women cannot access. This is how the broader political economy of society shapes the political economy of arts in its own image. Broadly, speaking political economy is all about the "ways in which a society provides for its needs, including the need for art as cultural expression."⁷⁶ Bechtold, Gunn, and Hozic note that the political economy of art is tied to "its role in creating culture." In a sense, art "production, consumption, aesthetics and its social significance, public funding, and legislation all contribute to society's cultural reproduction." In Bulawayo, like in most Global South communities, the face of poverty is female; this imbalance in accessing the cultural goods in arts is gendered because women are effectively closed out of this "cultural reproduction." 79

In order to survive in the arts under the challenges of a crashing economy, female artists try to find arts spaces that they can access, such as the Intwasa Arts Festival. This is even though they still feel closed out of it. This is despite emphasizing that arts are a safe space for males and not female artists. One artist involved in theater and filmmaking said arts management in the city is male and she felt that as a space, the arts were "more friendly to male artists than it is to females." She said this is because the arts industry is 80 percent run by men with few women.

Bulawayo as a Victim of Harare's Cultural Imperialism

The other challenge that Bulawayo artists have to face is that they have a thin market because they are caught between the cultural imperialism of Harare to the north and South Africa's cultural imperialism to the south. South Africa's imperialism comes with Western imperialism. This section will discuss Harare's cultural imperialism, and the next section discusses South Africa's cultural imperialism.

Harare's cultural imperialism is captured well in the issue of language. Ndebele people are about 20 percent of the population, which means that they have a small slice of the cultural market in the country. In the context of Zimbabwe's language politics, IsiNdebele, although

not officially considered to be a minority language, in relation to Shona, it is a minority. So all these languages found in Western Zimbabwe are minority languages although Ndebele may pretend not to be one. Nationally and in terms of function, Ndebele is indeed a minority language.

As a result of this, Ncube and Siziba argue that "the use of Shona in national public forums, and the insistence that non-Shona people speak or accede to the saturation of this language in Zimbabwean space, are characteristic of the domination and marginalisation of minorities in Zimbabwe." 82 Ncube and Siziba tie these challenges around language to the "state-sponsored violence" that they argue has "been significant in shaping the subjectivities of Ndebele people and their relationship to the state." 83 This has had an impact on artists, and as a result "some artists have reformulated and repackaged themselves to meet the unwritten yet palpable laws that privilege the Shona language and Shona products. These artists not only relocate to Harare, but some either sing their songs in Shona or code-mix to include Shona in their songs or do both." They argue, "the manner in which Ndebele-speakers have to perform in Shona has to be viewed within the wider socio-cultural and political context in which Shona culture and language override all other forms of authenticity in Zimbabwe. These modes of marginalisation, exclusion and silencing are manifest in the fields of arts." 85

Bulawayo as a Victim of South Africa's Cultural Sub-Imperialism

The other hardships for Bulawayo artists is a peculiar one. On one hand, Bulawayo is the biggest city in Matabeleland, a region that has huge historical and cultural ties with the Nguni (Zulu, Xhosa, Swati and Ndebele), Sotho, and Venda people of South Africa. On the other hand, Bulawayo and other urban and peri-urban spaces in Matabeleland also have huge populations of people from the Mashonaland region who identify as Shona. This has had the implication that Matabeleland, in its urban centers, is a region that lives in the cultural shadows of both South Africa and Harare. IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, Venda and Sotho languages are spoken in Matabeleland, and most people can follow the languages. Culturally, the Ndebele share huge similarities with the Zulu, and the Zulu dominate South Africa's cultural output. Artists in Bulawayo are therefore competing with South African artists for the hearts and souls of the people of Matabeleland. This is made a mammoth task by the fact that South African artists are supported by a huge infrastructure, in which the government and the private sector invest a lot.

In what can be characterized as cultural sub-imperialism, in many instances, South African actors and actresses have been chosen to tell the stories of the Rwanda genocide in films *Hotel Rwanda* and *Sometime in April* over Rwandese actors, for example. Extending Mauro's sub-imperialism thesis, Bond has argued that South Africa today plays a role similar to that of Brazil in Latin America and India in Asia, where the country does not only passively accept Western hegemony but collaborates "actively with imperialist expansion, assuming in this expansion the position of a key nation." 86 The examples of the two movies produced by Hollywood companies illustrate South Africa's cultural sub-imperialism, which Matabeleland has felt in a specific way. This is the argument that Mandla Moyo is making when he points out that "people got used to pirating South African stuff, not because they wanted to, because in any case it was expensive for them to do that, then they got addicted to piracy." 87 This is because people never pirate music or any piece of arts that they have not fallen in love with.

The huge urban populations from Mashonaland, culturally, responds well to music from the motherland and that is why Harare artists manage to pull huge crowds in Bulawayo. On the other hand, artists from South Africa also pull huge crowds in Bulawayo. This is a feat that Bulawayo artists struggle to achieve.

What Needs to be Done?

Most of the interviewees argue that the solution to the challenges that artists face lies in two areas. First, artists uniting "to come together and find ways of forming a sustainable burial society." 88 The word "sustainable" stands out in Baya's views and points to the idea of arts as a commons. Second, artists feel that, "the government must give a hand to the art sector, we need to be recognized as an industry." 89 Musician Bethule sees the government as part of the problem raising the need that it be part of the solution: "the government should protect artists as they are taxpayers. Strict laws to deal with piracy and unscrupulous music promoters should be introduced." 90 Poet Bhekumusa Moyo believes that, "the National Arts Council (NAC) should set schemes for artists. It's their job to provide that guarantee." 11 The NAC is a government department under the ministry of arts.

Conclusion

This paper has described the nature of the challenges that artists in Bulawayo face because of the economic challenges that the country's second largest city is engulfed in like the rest of the nation. A narrative and critical discourse analysis of the interviews with the eight artists revealed challenges that have been discussed under ten thematic subheadings. The first challenge revolves around exploitation where the artists said they feel used as they put in more work than what they earn out of their efforts. This is tied to the broader theme of alienation and precarity where the artists feel a disconnect between their work and themselves. Second, most of the artists pointed out how they are indebted because they have had to spend their own money to finance production costs, especially in cases where they want to produce art independently without being commissioned by rich individuals or companies. In such cases, art has become a labor of love rather than an investment out of which they expect to earn something to look after their families. Third, while arts has long been regarded as a space for uneducated young people trying to earn a living, artists are now highly educated. However, what they earn out of their work does not match their levels of education compared to other professions such as medicine or law. Fourth, the precarity in arts has been blamed on weak cultural institutions that are not able to invest in and protect artists. It would seem the arts industry is an industry that is yet to be born in Bulawayo. Fifth, the growth in technology has also been seen as worsening the precarious position that artists in Bulawayo find themselves in. However, technology is seen as a double-edged sword in that some artists use it to cut production costs as it avails cheap facilities for making and marketing art. Sixth, the breakdown in the donor-centered model of arts funding that has worked for the industry since the 1980s has been another challenge raised by the artists. Artists, like media managers, therefore, have to think of a new arts funding model that will ensure that the industry grows and is sustainable. Seventh, unlike other spaces of work like medicine and law, where the professionals there have medical aid assistance, artists operate without any assurance mechanisms that if anything happens to their health, they can be looked after. However, artists have tried to address this challenge by being part of local community initiatives like stokvellas (clubs) and burial societies in their working class communities. Eighth, women face multiple levels of precarization in the arts industry in that they have to put up with the general challenges that have to do with the economic meltdown and have to contend with patriarchy and the gendered nature of arts. Patriarchy is linked to the scramble for the little resources available in the arts space. Ninth, Bulawayo artists have had to struggle because of the challenges that they have had to put up related to the politics of the country and the politically economy of language and culture. The political economy of language in Zimbabwe means that artists in Bulawayo, who work mostly in IsiNdebele language have a small market for their work. Tenth, and linked to the previous

point, artists in Bulawayo also have to compete with the big artists in South Africa who have a huge infrastructure that supports them. This is because of the similarities in language and culture between the Ndebele people of Bulawayo and some ethnic groups, especially the Nguni ethnic groups of South Africa.

Artists Interviewed

- 1. Raisedon Baya, playwright, theatre director and producer/arts manager.
- 2. Mandla Moyo, actor, director and theatre entrepreneur.
- 3. Khulekani Bethule, musician and music producer.
- 4. Mgcini Nyoni, photographer, playwright and arts manager.
- 5. Bhekumusa Moyo, poet, playwright and arts producer.
- 6. Ms. Thoko Zulu, playwright, filmmaker and arts administrator/manager.
- 7. Ms. Cynthia Mutandi, arts administrator.
- 8. Anonymous, playwright and filmmaker.

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Multicultural Redemption: *Crazy Rich Asians* and the Politics of Representation

Corinne Mitsuye Sugino

ABSTRACT This essay examines the film *Crazy Rich Asians* and its surrounding celebratory discourse in order to consider the relationship between multicultural media production and contemporary power dynamics. *Crazy Rich Asians* has been exalted by the public as a win for diversity, representation, and racial progress. Yet the film is not an anomaly but part of a larger trend in mainstream U.S. television and film that have begun to proliferate shows with "diverse" casts and "progressive" storylines such as *Black Panther, Master of None*, and *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*, among others. I argue that the contemporary multicultural era has given rise to a common narrative of racial reconciliation, in which inclusion within hierarchy is rendered synonymous with redemption from racial violence. I term this narrative a "multicultural redemption narrative," and suggest *Crazy Rich Asians* illuminates how it works. Specifically, this narrative does the discursive and ideological work of constraining the imaginative boundaries of liberation, such that liberation can only be imagined as wielding the very systems of oppression one seeks to escape.

Once, when speaking with my father about anti-Asian racism, he told me about a conversation he had with my grandparents about why they didn't fight back after being incarcerated at an internment camp during World War II. They had told him that "instead of fighting the white people, we decided we would out-do them, and that would be the best payback for what they had done to us." This feeling, of out-doing the whites, would in their minds bring retribution for a history of discrimination, concretely proving they deserved the same respect given to their white counterparts. This message of redemption, passed down to me by my father, is not an uncommon narrative amongst many East Asian American communities. Presidential candidate Andrew Yang, for example, told a triumphant story at a 2019 democratic debate of how his immigrant father had grown up on a peanut farm in a house with no floors, yet went on to earn a PhD and now has a son running for president. At the heart of this message is not only a classic bootstrap narrative but a story of redemption; a story in which Asians might out-do the whites or at least match them, and through hard work be redeemed from past exclusion.

A similar story of redemption animates the hit Hollywood film *Crazy Rich Asians*. Based on Kevin Kwan's best-selling novel of the same name, the film follows the story of Chinese American Rachel Chu as she travels to Singapore with her boyfriend, Nick Young, to meet his family and attend his best friend's wedding. However, she soon discovers that Nick's family is one of the wealthiest in Singapore, something he had neglected to tell her. Because of her background as an American-born, upper-middle-class economics professor who is the daughter to a working-class, single-mother, Rachel struggles to be accepted by the ridiculously wealthy Youngs. In particular, Nick's mother Eleanor Young is convinced that Rachel is an ill-fit for a traditional Chinese family that values family over the American values of pursuing one's "passion."

After its release in August 2018, popular articles and online commentary have prolifically celebrated the film for being the first Hollywood film to feature an all-Asian cast in 25 years. They herald the story for its departure from tired stereotypical depictions of Asians

as martial-arts masters or foreign threats, claiming instead it portrays multidimensional characters and speaks to cultural differences between Asians and Asian Americans. As Kent Ono and Vincent Pham note, historically mainstream representations of Asians have been overdetermined by yellow peril discourses, model minority stereotypes, yellowface, and other stereotypical depictions. Asian Americans' perspectives have been marginalized and seen as issue-specific "race films" relegated to the margins of popular productions. This history of exclusion likely propelled much of the compulsory celebration surrounding *Crazy Rich Asians*, which not only brought Asian faces onto the Hollywood scene but developed their characters outside of tired racial tropes.

At the same time, the film has been rightly criticized. A number of think pieces and opinion articles critique the film for its unbridled celebration of excessive wealth and for largely limiting its representations to East Asians while excluding Southeast Asians. Scholars have responded similarly. While Anne Cheng criticizes the film for its exaltation of an Asian subject protected only through wealth and mastery over European style, Grace Hong examines the book trilogy upon which the movie is inspired, arguing its portrayal of a global cosmopolitan capitalist class of Asians extends the model minority discourse into the present neoliberal milieu. As these responses illustrate, the popularity of *Crazy Rich Asians* should not be ignored, as its cultural impact speaks to the persuasive value of the underlying narrative in the movie. Put differently, it indicates there is something about the film's tale of acceptance, upward mobility, and reconciliation that audiences find alluring.

This essay considers the impact that narratives of redemption have in the contemporary multicultural era, taking *Crazy Rich Asians* and its surrounding celebratory discourse as a case in point. Indeed, the film is not a complete anomaly but part of an emerging trend in mainstream media that have begun to proliferate productions with "diverse" casts and "progressive" story lines such as *Black Panther, Blackkklansman, Master of None,* and *To All the Boys I've Loved Before,* among others. As Herman Gray notes, an increasing number of "progressive" neoliberal media productions attempt to reconcile the past with a multicultural, harmonized vision of the future. Given this trend, it is worth exploring what makes films like *Crazy Rich Asians* so appealing. Indeed, the proliferation of diverse media representation might be considered as part of the broader evolution of US race relations. As scholars such as Dylan Rodriguez, Jared Sexton, and Frank B. Wilderson III have pointed to, white supremacy and anti-blackness persist under the auspices of liberal multiculturalism which produces the illusion of progress while maintaining conditions of domination.

Building on these conversations, I argue that the contemporary multicultural era has given rise to a common narrative of racial reconciliation, in which inclusion within hierarchy is rendered synonymous with redemption from racial violence. I term this narrative a "multicultural redemption narrative" and suggest Crazy Rich Asians illuminates how it works. Specifically, this narrative does the discursive and ideological work of constraining the imaginative boundaries of liberation. Beyond criticizing the film's narrow imagery, I seek to interrogate the process by which it can only conceptualize Asian American resistance within the confines of a larger, violent structure. It was precisely this narrative that motivated my own family to think out-doing the whites was the path to redemption. Here, racial liberation is constrained to a vision in which escaping racism is only possible by climbing the ranks of hierarchy instead of seeking to eviscerate it. The effect is not only that substantive liberation from anti-Asian racism is circumscribed, but any semblance of freedom is possible only through the perpetuation of more violence. In this regard, multiculturalism goes beyond a false commitment to inclusion to constituting a disciplinary function that maintains the tenets of anti-blackness and white supremacy by limiting the scope of what liberation looks like.

I identify three ways that the film and its surrounding commentary deploy a multicultural redemption narrative: first, by presenting capitalist ascendency as an antidote to racial violence; second, through assimilation to the values of whiteness as a form of redress for past exclusion; and third, by attempting to reconcile anti-Asian racism through anti-black rhetorical strategies and the devaluation of darker-skinned Asians. Though multicultural redemption narratives are not exclusive to *Crazy Rich Asians*, the film is a particularly good example because of its cultural impact and celebration. Moreover, that white and black people are almost entirely absent in the film is significant: even in a story line of almost exclusively Asians, their lives can only be thought through references that glorify whiteness and pathologize blackness.

Crazy Rich Asians as a Multicultural Redemption Narrative

The rise of inclusive media productions might be situated within a broader regime of multicultural violence. As Dylan Rodriguez points to, the logic of "inclusion [has] become crucial to the historical project of white supremacist globality." At the same time, scholars such as Saidiya Hartman, Jared Sexton, and Frank B. Wilderson III have pointed to how liberal incorporation maintains the tenets of an anti-black world. In regards to film specifically, Wilderson writes that we now live in a "cinematic milieu which stresses 'diversity,' 'unity,' 'civic participation,' 'hybridity,' 'access,' and 'contribution.' . . . This state of affairs exacerbates—or, more precisely, mystifies and veils—the ontological death of the Slave." 10 "Diversity" functions as an essential component of multicultural violence, insofar as it entails symbolic inclusion into society; that is, diversity shorthands the process by which difference is readily subsumed into a multicultural racial structure without substantially altering its power dynamics. It is no wonder, then, that films like Crazy Rich Asians, Black Panther, and To All the Boys I've Loved Before are celebrated for their diversity, insofar as they merely involve the inclusion of diverse faces while conditioning audiences to reinvest hope in the same power dynamics that have historically marginalized them.

Moreover, these scholars point to the necessity for Asian American racialization to be analyzed in relation to anti-blackness. As Jared Sexton contends, the degradation of Asian Americans throughout history, while abhorrent, functions at a different scope and scale as black people. 11 Attention to the historical specificity of anti-blackness is salient in that Asian Americans wield structural power over black people, against whom gratuitous violence remains constant in comparison to the contingent violence against non-blacks. This is not to say that anti-Asian racism does not persist into the present in insidious ways, nor does it suggest anti-blackness explains the totality of anti-Asian racism. It does, however, name anti-blackness as foundational to civil society in a way that cannot be rendered analogous with other forms of racism. ¹² For Sexton, insofar as society only works to combat the suffering experienced by non-black people, it will "inevitably fail to make substantial gains insofar as it forfeits or sidelines the fate of blacks, the prototypical targets." 13 As Mari Matsuda details, racism against indentured Asian servants and perceptions of Asian Americans as deviant were prefigured in part through slavery and a fear of blackness. 14 To understand Asian American inclusion thus requires placing it in context with anti-blackness. In her analysis of the Moynihan report, Hortense Spillers notes the ways in which the US systematically frames black maternal relationships as pathological. 15 In this regard, we might consider how Crazy Rich Asians' portrayal of Eleanor Young as a decadent, tradition-bound mother valorizes her commitment to family over and against the pathologization of black mothers and women.

At the same time, the contemporary multicultural milieu is intricately bound up with notions of reconciliation. Jinah Kim contends narrative reconciliation operates as a technology of capture by utilizing the celebration of identity to provide a sense of closure to past racial trauma while demonizing those who refuse such celebratory discourse, particularly in regards to histories of colonialism and anti-Asian racism during the Pacific wars. ¹⁶ As Jun Okada notes, mainstream media demands compulsory positive imagery about Asian Americans, imposing an expectation for positive reconciliation with racial violence and hope for a better future. ¹⁷ Here, multiculturalism works to conjure images of inclusion while reconciliation reframes that inclusion as a justification for historical forgetting. It is within this context that multicultural redemption narratives gain their stronghold; by capitalizing on the neoliberal celebration of identity and the feel-good politics of reconciliation.

Multicultural redemption narratives do the material and symbolic work of producing a limited imagination of what it means for Asians to resist racism, by reducing racism to something that can be overcome through upward mobility within an established power matrix. It represents an overcoming narrative where liberation from oppression is akin to vertical movement up a hierarchy as opposed to destruction of that hierarchy. Narrative is an important word in this dynamic. Sara Ahmed describes narrative as "directed;" like a plotline, a narrative moves forward toward something as its conclusion, establishing how certain events lead to others. For her, this forward movement can work to endlessly defer and promise happiness at the same time. $\frac{18}{100}$ In my account of multicultural redemption narratives, this "directed" movement occurs through imagining the horizon of reconciliation. In Crazy Rich Asians, the horizon of Asian liberation is staged not only as imminently possible within a global, cosmopolitan world, but imagined only within the confines of global ascendency, upward mobility, and distance from pathology. Multicultural redemption narratives operate at both a descriptive and prescriptive level; they proclaim Asian's place in history to be one of overcoming, a romantic story of immigrant grit and resilience, while projecting a fantasy of a future in which Asians might exist alongside or even replace whites in global power relations. In Crazy Rich Asians and its surrounding celebratory commentary, I identify three themes that highlight this dynamic: capitalist ascendency as racial reconciliation, assimilation to whiteness, and the deployment of anti-black rhetorical strategies. Taken together, they reveal how the film is animated by promises of multicultural redemption that discipline the boundaries of liberation.

Capitalist Ascendency as Racial Remedy

Crazy Rich Asians spends little time commenting on the racism experienced by Asians at the hands of white people. The only scene that does do so, and one of the only scenes with white people in it, is the opening scene. Eleanor Young and her children attempt to check into an American hotel, only to be informed by the white concierge that the hotel is booked and that they should look into "Chinatown" instead. In response, Eleanor calls her husband, who buys the hotel on the spot. The scene ends with a sense of triumph that the family was able to overcome otherness and teach the white racist staff a lesson. The inaugural scene thus promises racial reconciliation through upward class mobility, forwarding a satisfactory narrative in which the Youngs are able transcend racism through their wealth. Here, capitalist excess dissolves racial anxiety and eludes meaningful engagement with the realities of race, presenting Nick Young's family as living in a fantasy of post-racial inclusion.

This "gotcha" moment, and feeling of satisfaction, however, does more than simply sidestep questions of race; it frames Asian liberation as synonymous with upward class mobility. The effect is a narrative that glorifies the utilization of a violent capitalist system

in order to secure oneself from violence. Purchasing power, here, becomes the ticket to racial liberation, and while in this instance we might be inclined to think the white people got what they deserved, such a reading nevertheless presents a dangerous narrative: that the best way to confront one's oppressors is to enact another form of power. In this regard, multicultural redemption narratives ally themselves with rainbow capitalism, insofar as wielding global corporate power is authorized as a tool for challenging discrimination.

This lesson of class ascendency as an antidote to exclusion persists throughout the film, saturating even it's commentary on the divide between Asians and Asian Americans. Ultimately, Rachel resolves the tension of her being too Americanized for the Youngs by successfully navigating the world of Singapore's ultra-wealthy, thereby proving she is worthy of marrying Nick. This includes Rachel's navigation of the upper-class fashion styles. With the aid of her friend Peik Lin—who loans her clothing in order to fit into the expectations of the one percent—Rachel is able to win the admiration of the wealthy Asians, even including one of Eleanor Youngs' closest friends. Multicultural redemption narratives thus teach mimicry of power instead of its abolition. This scene offers instruction to both mimic the gatekeeping, capitalist functions of high culture, as well as the notion that if one is able to look the part in terms of class, they might be able to experience the part in terms of whiteness.

This theme of economic upward mobility and mimicry of the upper classes represents a form of model minority discourse through the idea that racial others can be incorporated successfully into a multicultural world through consumerism. As Grace Hong has pointed out about the book series, *Crazy Rich Asians* presents a twenty-first-century iteration of the model minority as a global, mobile class of Asians. 19 The model minority heralds Asian Americans and their (supposed) successful assimilation into society as proof of the values of American meritocracy, upward mobility, and capitalism, and *Crazy Rich Asians* does this on a global, cosmopolitan level.

This model minority discourse becomes even more imperative as the novel is brought to the big screen. Peter Feng observes the way in which Asian American media must navigate between appealing to a popular audience through "universal" narratives while at the same time attempting to maintain cultural authenticity. Consequently, Asian American filmmakers often end up investing into coherent positions like the model minority in order to appeal to a broader audience. 20 Here, the model minority works to exalt American values of meritocracy, insofar as it implies anyone can "make it" if they just work hard to ascend in a capitalist structure. It is perhaps in part this reason that the film so unapologetically glorifies an upwardly mobile class—not only in its plotline but also in aesthetic production. As Okada notes, this unproblematic projection of upward mobility appeals to white audiences by appearing to evince racism's waning power and casting minority experiences within middle-class, white ideals. 21 It also presents the limits of Hollywood representation, as it would be difficult to imagine the film in any other way. Beholden to a "universal" narrative, Asian American legibility is constrained to those identifiable narratives acceptable within the dominant social imaginary. Redemption, then, presents the most appealing and arguably one of the only ways in which Asians might become legible on the big screen.

Multicultural redemption narratives work to facilitate the slipperiness between Asian American media, Asian American people, and Asian American liberation, animating them through coherent categories like the model minority. These narratives work to metonymically draw associations between "Asian Americanness," "Asian media," or "Asian liberation," insofar as they are rendered synonymous with upward mobility, immigrant grit, and redemption from racism through visibility. They seek to condense and constrain

one's conception of these categories, facilitating a slipperiness between Asian representation on the big screen and freedom from racism. Put differently, as "Asian Americanness" becomes linked with values such as bootstrap ideology and immigrant grit, "Asian liberation" is concomitantly rendered as upward mobility. As a result, the slipperiness between these categories functions in such a way to both render Asian American representations legible and to constrain how audiences imagine the possibility of Asian American resistance to racism.

The film's exaltation of the model minority reveals the ongoing relations of a multicultural, racist present. As Rodriguez details, the model minority emerged in conjunction with the conservative discourse of "law and order" to produce a "white-Asian alliance" that criminalizes black and brown people. Rodriguez pushes scholarship in Asian American studies beyond a conception of the model minority as simply a stereotype or "tool" to pit Asians against black and brown populations. Instead, it is a social fabrication that represents a "seminal move in the production of a national(ist) 'multiculturalism' that fortifies and extrapolates historical white supremacist social formations—including and especially the burgeoning US prison regime." In other words, the model minority is interminably wrapped up with the process of multicultural incorporation that compounds the systematic racist criminalization techniques and the expansion of an antiblack incarceration regime.

As alluded to previously, the model minority has historically been mired in the anti-black tropes of the Moynihan report and concomitant criminalization of black maternal figures. As Spillers highlights, the black family is characterized in this report as being mired in a state of pathology, unable to ascend in society and at fault for their own oppression. ²⁴ The report in turn elevates Asian Americans—in particular Japanese and Chinese Americans—as the example par excellence for assimilation. Representations of the model minority thus garner their condition of possibility from the pathologization of black people, and the Young's attachment to traditional, *cultural* valuation of family might be considered in relation to the ways in which black people are framed as culturally deficient, lacking proper kinship ties, and unable to assimilate as a result. Thus, *Crazy Rich Asians* as a film about a global, cosmopolitan class of Chinese elite is animated by a subtext of anti-black pathologization, illuminating the connections between its narrative of capitalist ascendency and anti-blackness.

Of course, the model minority does not include all Asian Americans, and it is historically those darker-skinned Southeast Asian Americans such as the Hmong, Cambodian, Filipino, and Vietnamese that are excluded from this vision of assimilation—something that speaks to the way colorism works *within* Asian American communities, as they are disparaged in relation to, for example, Japanese and Chinese Americans. As noted by Sexton, black people serve as the prototypical targets for racist violence and it is often those Asians positioned relatively or perceptively closer to blackness that experience disproportionate levels of violence. Thus, the romanticization of the model minority not only further perpetuates an engrained system of anti-black reasoning but anti-Asian racism, insofar as it represents a willingness to sideline those Asians considered unassimilable.

Moreover, what multicultural redemption narratives reveal about the workings of the model minority is the way in which it functions not only as a social position, but how the imagination of Asians' freedom from racism is overdetermined by the logic of the market. In the film, for example, proof of one's merit is rendered synonymous with anti-racism and social acceptance, fuelling a narrative where individual grit and resiliency is a testament to being worthy of acceptance. The model minority is an alluring narrative; it presents a post-racial fantasy in which merit can overcome historically engrained exclusion and

cultural rifts. The consequence, however, is that Asians become invested in the model minority as a narrative heuristic, in which redemption is akin to climbing capitalist ranks as opposed to recognizing the role capitalism has played in restructuring the world—especially the Pacific—in favor of global white supremacy.

Like the content of the film itself, much of the popular commentary on *Crazy Rich Asians* further employ a multicultural redemption narrative in which the values of consumerism and capitalism are presented as solutions to racial violence. For example, Karen Ho concludes her celebration of the film by stating, "after years of saying otherwise, Hollywood has finally realized that telling more inclusive stories is *just good business.*" Trade press articles express similar sentiments, noting that producers Brad Simpson and Nina Jacobson acknowledged "it's inspiring [working with diverse casts] but also good business." Thus, both insiders and commentators recognize that while it may be nice to see more Asian faces on screen, it ultimately works to support the expansion of corporate profit, and without this profit and concomitant interest convergence, *Crazy Rich Asians* as a mass mainstream production would not have been desirable. Indeed, multicultural redemption narratives capitalize on neoliberalism's function to view minority experience as the newest, profitable niche market—something that speaks to the liberal fetishism of a multicultural film industry.

Jodi Melamed helps to situate the drive for this type of mainstream inclusion and the celebration of representational diversity in an era of multiculturalism as it relates to global capitalism. She details the rise of a racial regime of multiculturalism, dividing the post-World War II era into three successive stages: racial liberalism, liberal multiculturalism, and neoliberal multiculturalism. This period gave rise to official antiracisms that helped to fuel US global influence and capitalism by disarticulating race from material conditions. All melamed's work thus pointedly speaks to the rise of an explicitly multicultural form of discourse that obscures and seeks to justify global relations of capital and empire. We might consider, for example, *Crazy Rich Asians* within her conception of neoliberal multiculturalism insofar as its celebration of diversity and Asian liberation is couched within a vision that naturalizes global, neoliberal citizenship.

At the same time, however, I diverge slightly from Melamed in that she considers the post-World War II era as a "racial break" that is "complete" in the sense it has led to the rise of a "new worldwide racial project." While I agree this era constitutes an important turning point in how race is framed, I would not consider it a *complete* break or a *new* worldwide project insofar as I believe the seeds for a formally anti-racist era of empire were planted much earlier. For example, the ability for American colonists to define themselves through the values of freedom, equality, and liberty was simultaneously dependent on the institution of slavery. In this regard, the inception of the US itself stands as a precursor to contemporary multiculturalism insofar as it contained within itself the (seeming) contradiction of pluralism and cosmopolitanism anchored by a history of slavery and indigenous genocide. Moreover, we might consider the way in which white abolitionism and the (formal) abolition of slavery gave rise to a discourse of burdened responsibility that rearticulated anti-black violence in the language of progress and American anti-racism. 30

Nevertheless, Melamed's work is important for her consideration of the way anti-racism is detached from radical challenges to a global order of violence, and put in service of its reconstitution. Moreover, her particular decision to consider literature is significant; as she points out, these texts operated to both produce the illusion of progress while instilling a narrative that would facilitate the internalization a race-liberal order, particular visions of neoliberal citizenship, and lay claim to which forms of anti-racism would be rendered acceptable and which ones pathological. 31 suggest that *Crazy Rich*

Asians and other media productions function to similarly to solicit investment into a particular vision of multiculturalism that reconstitute anti-racism as an accomplice to domination. Specifically, multicultural redemption narratives function to limit the imagination of Asian liberation to the confines of wielding the very power one seeks to escape.

Many of the celebratory accounts of *Crazy Rich Asians* render investment in mainstream representation as synonymous with advocacy for racial justice. Consider the following commentary: "There is a moral imperative among Asian Americans to see *Crazy Rich Asians*.... It feels as if viewers must demonstrate the demand for their stories on screen—otherwise, another movie boasting an all-Asian cast might not happen in Hollywood for yet another 25 years." The account frames viewing the film as *a moral imperative* instead of just entertainment. Mainstream representation remains the telos of this imperative, viewing the generation of economic demand as a strategy for reconciling exclusion. In this regard, Asian American representation becomes a direct driver of consumerism, not only expanding capitalist violence but presenting it as a mechanism for fighting racial injustice. Indeed, this drive was successful. Asian Americans turned out en masse to see *Crazy Rich Asians*, representing almost forty percent of theatre audiences compared to their usual turnout for other films, which is about six percent of audiences. Hardly a "win" for Asian Americans then, *Crazy Rich Asians* more closely resembles the commodification of Asian American's identity than it does their liberation.

More importantly, however, it presents a narrative in which Asian liberation can only be imagined within the confines of existing hierarchy. The paratextual dimensions of the film parrot the same multicultural redemption narrative as the film itself by understanding the release of *Crazy Rich Asians* as evidence of racial progress and cause for celebration. In this respect, multicultural redemption narratives operate by attaching redemption to visibility; forwarding a narrative in which occupying positions one has formerly been excluded from is the only horizon on which we can fathom justice. Multicultural redemption narratives thus function not simply as feel-good stories of redemption but to limit resistance to movement within neoliberal markets, imaginatively enclosing Asian liberation in such a way that its progression can only be charted in service to more violence. Recognizing how these imaginative boundaries are drawn presents the impetus both to broaden the horizon on which liberation is dreamt and to reframe our understanding of multiculturalism to apprehend the way it overdetermines how individuals envisage challenges to structural power.

Assimilation to Whiteness and Mainstream Representation

Multicultural redemption narratives operate not only to rationalize representation in a global market as evidence of racial progress but to ritualistically reaffirm whiteness as the standard by which one's freedom from violence should be measured. In a multicultural era of increasing proliferation of identity and difference, these narratives work to keep the dream of whiteness alive. *Crazy Rich Asians* employs a multicultural redemption narrative by presenting the ability to both assimilate to whiteness and be included in mainstream white media representation as indicators of racial reconciliation. The ultra-rich Asians in Young's family and Singapore more broadly are portrayed as a cosmopolitan class of sophisticated, wealthy families educated in Western universities and traditions. Nick Young himself speaks in a British accent throughout the film, and references are made to how several of the characters attended British boarding schools. This performance is meant to convey that these Asians are not the wrong type of Asians. Instead, they are educated in American and British vernacular and customs; they are the respectable type

of Asians that are palatable to a Western audience as a result of their American education, values, and class stature. The "crazy rich" Asians are thus presented as having social stature in such a way that is only legible with whiteness as the referent points for respectability, prestige, and intellect.

Moreover, the multicultural redemption narrative at play here works as revelation; it reveals to the audience that Asians, too, can achieve the high accolades, education, and status that white people can. Here, we can see the interplay between the themes of whiteness and class ascendency, as they work in the film to reference each other as interchangeable. Yet it also speaks to the way in which multicultural redemption narratives teach mimicry of dominant power not only in terms of class but also in terms of proximity to whiteness. Put differently, it is not just that the extremely wealthy Asians are rich, but also that they are not too foreign. The effect is that entryway into the romanticized lifestyle of the "crazy rich" Asians—one that is presented in the film as both luxurious and powerful enough to confront racism—is determined by one's willingness and ability to comport to the customs of those in power.

The move to assimilate to whiteness might be thought alongside multicultural media's demand for compulsory happiness, plurality, and reconciliation. In her analysis of *Come See the Paradise*, Traise Yamamoto maintains that despite the film's ostensibly progressive critique of anti-miscegenation, it nonetheless replicates violent notions about Asian American women that render them invisible except when displaying their hypersexuality. For her, this film along with depictions of interracial couples on prime-time television demonstrate how "the persistence of ideals of diversity in which we 'celebrate the differences' suggests a hodgepodge of happy, inclusive plurality, but obscures the extent to which they rely on images of equality that do little or nothing to guarantee structures of equality." 34 Yamamoto points to the importance of understanding how multicultural representation enacts plural inclusion without critical reflection on how those characters continue to rely on racist tropes.

Though in some ways Crazy Rich Asians is similar to the dynamic Yamamoto identifies, at the same time the celebratory discourse surrounding the film was inspired precisely because it did not flatten the characters to tired racial tropes but demonstrated the complexity of their personalities. What Crazy Rich Asians' multicultural redemption narrative uniquely reveals is that even if multiculturalism has moved beyond simple tokenization to incorporate multidimensional characters, their engagement with those characters is nonetheless animated by whiteness as that which makes them legible outside of tired stereotypes. Though at times the movie incorporates a variety of languages, foods, and traditions, these largely remain in the background as exotic flair. The moments in which the audience is asked to think of the characters in any meaningful way is through a classic, Western-style romantic comedy plotline and Rachel's desire to be accepted by the ultra-wealthy, British-educated, Christian Young family. Thus, the supposed depth to the characters comes not only from their distance from perceived foreignness, but their proximity to a universal whiteness—a dynamic which forwards the narrative that the path to social acceptance lies in a successful performance of mimicry. Multicultural redemption narratives thus imaginatively constrain liberation to simply the act of occupying racial power, rendering the imagination of abolishing that power unthinkable.

The film rewards Rachel Chu for mimicking European beauty standards, revealing how the central conflict is legible only in relation to whiteness. As her friends Peik Lin and Oliver T'Sien help to dress Rachel for the big wedding, Peik Lin remarks to Oliver "I'm thinkin' eyebrow triage, root crimps, maybe some eyelid tape. What do you think?" To which Oliver replies, "Ugh, all of it," and the group sets out to get her ready. The reference

to eyelid tape in particular is telling, as it is popularly used by East Asian and Asian American people to eliminate the appearance of a "monolid" and mimic the shape of Caucasian eyes. Here, whiteness is held up as the standard for aesthetic beauty, something that is important for Rachel to be able to command the respect of the Youngs. She is vindicated once she arrives at the wedding, as even someone in Eleanor Young's inner circle compliments her on her look. By properly mimicking not only the fashion choices of the one percent but the markers of whiteness rendered synonymous with status, the ability to assimilate aesthetically to these standards is presented as a strategy for reconciling Rachel's alienation. In this way, Rachel's struggles to be accepted—the central conflict at the heart of the plot—are made legible through her attempts at mimicking whiteness.

The seductive nature of multicultural redemption narratives are reproduced by the celebratory discourse heralding the film as a monumental success for Asian American history. Multicultural redemption narratives function by rendering representation—that is, occupation amongst the ranks of power—as coterminous with racial progress. In the numerous think-pieces, opinion articles, and popular commentary written about Crazy Rich Asians, a number of trends emerge. Almost all of the commentary remarks on the fact that it is the first all-Asian cast in twenty-five years, and that the film is a "win" or "makes history" for representation. 35 35 One person explained, "It is a step in the right direction for Hollywood, long criticized for 'whitewashing' Asian characters or not casting Asians in leading roles" while another expressed support for the film because "there was no obvious stereotyping... instead [it showed] the nuances of Asian women's experiences across generations."36 To celebrate Crazy Rich Asians for its lack of "obvious stereotyping" reveals the narrow framework within which racial progress is understood; this account reduces anti-Asian racism to stereotypes; to caricatures like Kung Fu masters and Geishas. In this way, the simple removal of obvious stereotypes is read as redemption. This mystifies that racial violence exceeds mere stereotypes and encompass also those ways in which we are taught to desire the very power that has been waged against us.

Moreover, this commentary presumes that a "step in the right direction" is constituted through aesthetic representation. Finally, they exclaim, Asians get a seat at the table with the other Hollywood stars. More than just the all-too-familiar refrain that we are just *so glad* to see another Asian face on screen, this narrative does the same discursive work as the film; to celebrate movement within a hierarchy as evidence of its evisceration. This discourse of progress mystifies ongoing anti-Asian racism in the present by presuming that one can read media representation as synonymous with racial liberation. Anti-Asian hate crimes have been on the rise since at least 2017, and record numbers of Southeast Asians in particular are being targeted for deportation or funnelled into incarceration. A multicultural redemption narrative—presented here as Asians finally redeemed from their past exclusion from Hollywood—functions as a red herring. Considerations of racial justice are redirected away from challenging ongoing violence through a cruelly optimistic fantasy of imagining Asians as enjoying the same luxuries as whites. It is in this regard that liberation dreams are squelched under the weight of aesthetic pacification and the promise of redemption.

Kevin Kwan was ecstatic about his novel's Hollywood reproduction. In an interview about turning his novel into a movie, Kwan stated, "I think there was a universality to the story that people could relate to." In another interview, after being asked what the "best reaction" was by someone who had seen the movie, Kwan responds by telling a story of two white men admitting they cried during the film, stating "it's great to hear that, because that's what we believed from the beginning: that this story transcends race." Nevermind the Asian Americans who called the film a historic moment for Asian American

communities; for Kwan, the *best* reaction was when his desire to "transcend race" was affirmed with the stamp of approval from two white men.

Kwan's anecdote points to how not only status is rendered synonymous with whiteness, but relatability is as well. That *Crazy Rich Asians* could jerk the tears of two white men truly serves as evidence to Kwan that the story line not only "transcends race" but is a story line that audiences can identify with. Kwan utilizes a multicultural redemption narrative by attempting to incorporate Asian Americans into a universal instead of interrogating the way the "universal" is always beholden to violence. The narrative presented is one of redemption, achieved through assimilation to a (white) cosmopolitan story line. Here, the feelings of whites become the standard by which inclusion is judged, naturalizing white enjoyment as the boundary for apprehending acceptable forms of pro-Asian discourse.

Both the content of the film and its paratextual dynamics reveal the ways in which multicultural redemption narratives seek to redraw the boundaries of whiteness in a new light. Redemption is only legible through reference to whiteness, and those Asians who are able to demonstrate their proximity to it are presented as liberated subjects. It is in this regard that multicultural redemption narratives normalize a view that can only imagine Asian liberation within the confines of vertical movement within an existing hierarchy. Given this vertical movement, however, it stands to reason that any analysis of multicultural redemption narratives would be incomplete without an understanding not only of who the film teaches its audience to desire closeness to but also distance from. In what follows, I consider the ways in which the film's valuation of whiteness is animated by anti-blackness.

Anti-Blackness and the Devaluation of Darker-Skinned Asians

The assimilation to a white universal is never an isolated process but is always developed in conjunction with framing blackness as pathological; the fulcrum on which white universal desirability hinges. As such, the film is not only replete with a celebration of whiteness but with the twin process of devaluing blackness and those Asians positioned closer to blackness. As Sexton notes, white people project those traits seen as undesirable onto black people, and it is this pathologization of blackness that operates as the underside of the societal standard of white superiority. 40 This is not to say the totality of Asian racialization can be attributed to antiblackness, but antiblackness nonetheless play a role in making that racialization possible. Through the devaluation of blackness and darker-skinned Asians, the film represents an investment into the processes of antiblackness, insofar as the main characters only achieve their sense of assimilation through demonizing black people and darker-skinned Asians. It reveals the way in which antiblackness, even with no black characters present, nevertheless remains a structuring force in how the film's multicultural redemption narrative is able to imagine its celebration of Asian experiences.

In a number of scenes, the film distances East Asian characters from darker-skinned Asians. These characters are rendered more or less invisible throughout the film, with the exception of their presence as guards or service workers, such as when they open the limo door for Rachel when she arrives at the wedding. In another scene, Peik Lin drives Rachel to dinner at Nick's grandmother's mansion. They encounter two unnamed South Asian guards wearing turbans and holding bayonets at the entrance, recoiling in fear. After informing the guards of who they are, they let them in and never return to the screen again. Even in these brief moments it is easy to apprehend the ways in which the Asians that the film celebrates are light-skinned, wealthy East Asians, relegating Southeast

Asians to the background and portrayed as threatening. In showcasing the colorism present within Asian communities, these subtle references demonstrate just how limited *Crazy Rich Asians*' imagination of its decadent and powerful Asian class really is: it is entirely dependent on maintaining the tenets of an anti-black world, simply swapping out East Asians for whites in the hierarchy as the people expecting black and Southeast Asians to serve them. This not only demonstrates that whiteness gains its power in part through reference to anti-blackness, but how the aspirations of Asians are overdetermined by a political imagination that can paradoxically only fathom their freedom within the boundaries of oppression.

Multicultural redemption narratives remains tethered to antiblackness insofar as their promises of redemption go hand in hand with the promise of power. Nothing demonstrates this more clearly than the role of Princess Intan and Rachel Chu's interaction with her in the film. During the wedding, Eleanor Young and her friends gossip about the elite Princess Intan, who allegedly requested an entire row to herself so she didn't have to speak to the other attendees. Seen as untouchable and unapproachable to even the Youngs, Rachel is able bond with Intan over their mutual appreciation for economic theory. Rachel approaches Intan about an article she wrote on microloans, remarking that "I think your critics missed the point, because microloans lift up women, and women lift up economies." As such, Rachel is able to establish rapport with Intan and sit with her during the wedding, winning the jealous glances of Eleanor and her friends.

Framed as a feminist gesture, Rachel and Intan establish their newfound friendship on a bedrock of global anti-black and colonial restructuring of the globe. Microloans refers to an economic strategy popularized by organizations such as USAID and the World Bank in which they allocate small loans to impoverished individuals in nations such as Tanzania, Bangladesh, Benin, and Ghana so that they can establish a business enterprise. However, scholars point to their detrimental effects, primarily benefitting the lenders who charge inordinate interest rates, thereby producing cycles of debt under the illusion of humanitarianism. 41 Thus, one of the major moments in which Rachel proves her ability to fit in with the "crazy rich" occurs by bonding with Intan over a global neocolonial strategy. Multicultural redemption, here, functions by valorizing Asian people through the concomitant process of concretizing violence against black and brown people abroad. Rachel's pathway to reconciling her feelings of exclusion is staged through a project of global restructuring where her path to inclusion is paved by transnational suffering. In this regard, multicultural redemption narratives carve out a space for freedom from violence only within the confines of violence itself.

Similar reliance on the devaluation of darker-skinned Asians occurs when Peik Lin first informs Rachel about the history of the Young family and their wealth. Peik Lin explains that the Youngs came to Singapore in the 1800s when there was "nothing but jungles and pig farmers." Historically speaking, Singapore's status in the global economy as the home of a wealthy Chinese elite was facilitated primarily through British colonization beginning in 1819, which established the country as a trading port under the East India Company. The language of "jungles and pig farmers" calls on colonial imagery of Singapore and its indigenous inhabitants as uncivilized and backwards, devaluing them in comparison to the wealthy, sophisticated and British-educated Young family. This avowal of the family's violent history romanticizes the ascent to the sophisticated, globally influential status of the Youngs, and presents a narrative that calls on its audience to desire ascent in hierarchy as opposed to its destruction.

Peik Lin's character further reproduces racial violence through her performance of a black accent. She repeatedly appropriates a caricature of black vernacular through statements like, "Okay Nick! It's a party though" and "You gon' roll up to that weddin' and be like,

'bawk bawk, bitch'" while waving her index finger and moving her head from side to side. Hailed as a departure from racial caricatures of Asian Americans—caricatures which often included yellowface—Peik Lin's character unapologetically appropriates black culture for the benefit of landing a hit for Asian Americans on the big screen. 43 It is shameful that Asians can herald this movie as evidence of racial progress—especially considering that any so-called gains of the Asian American movement were only possible as a result of being inspired by the black-led Civil Rights and Black Power movements in the 60s and 70s. 44 It demonstrates a willingness to sacrifice black people when an opportunity for assimilation and the accumulation of social capital presents itself. This dynamic speaks to the arguments made by Jared Sexton and Dylan Rodriguez, namely, that Asian American ascendance and incorporation into mainstream society comes at the expense of black people—in this context through a willingness to profit off of and render black cultural expression fungible.

Multicultural redemption narratives function through an interminable connection to the concretization of anti-blackness. The desirability of whiteness and class stature, as vertical movement within an established social structure becomes possible only with the concomitant imagination that one, just like the whites, might have power over the wretched of the earth. East Asian empowerment, here, is hinged on the ability to wield power over Southeast Asians, the ability to appropriate black vernacular expression, and global anti-black and neo-colonial economic practices. The film's triumphant narrative of redemption from a racist past, then, is achieved only through continual reference to colorism and anti-blackness. The multicultural redemption narrative present in *Crazy Rich Asians* thus reveals that the Asian American role in anti-blackness is more than simply complicity with ongoing violence. It is not simply looking the other way, but the active process by which anti-blackness is restaged even through attempts by Asians to escape their own oppression. Multicultural redemption narratives function, then, to constrain the imaginative possibilities for Asian liberation to the grips of antiblackness as a structuring force.

Conclusion

What does it mean when one is taught that the path to confronting their oppressors is best achieved by "out-doing the whites"? *Crazy Rich Asians* passes down a similar narrative my father once told me, but on a national scale. I understand, after centuries of exclusion, invisibility, and violence, the desire to have that "gotcha" moment where you really prove your tormentors wrong. Yet it is this alluring promise of redemption which makes Asian liberation so easily placed in service of expanding violence. In *Crazy Rich Asians*, the film and its surrounding commentary both deploy a multicultural redemption narrative that combine the incorporation of difference with a story of reconciliation to racial injury. In this article, I have chosen to focus on three themes which exemplify this narrative; capitalist ascendency, assimilation to whiteness, and the devaluation of blackness and Southeast Asians. Through them, multicultural redemption functions symbolically and imaginatively to constrain what liberation looks like.

It is narratives such as these that make compromise alluring, where aesthetic representation can stand in for access to the benefits of whiteness, and where one's liberation is gained only through the expansion of more violence. It is this narrative that leaves Asians satisfied with aesthetic representation while thousands continue to be deported under ICE. It is this narrative that drives Asians not only to complicity with antiblack violence but its active instantiation for the sake of themselves. The case of NYPD officer Peter Liang, for example, is telling; tens of thousands of Asian Americans turned out to protest the conviction of Liang after he killed Akai Gurley, a black man who was simply going to visit his girlfriend. In the minds of these protesters, what they wanted was

for Liang to be treated like white police officers, who could kill black people with impunity. In this way, freedom from discrimination is staged through the desire to occupy the same protected position as whites, and in doing so they bolster an ingrained system of racial violence instead of dismantling it. Multicultural redemption narratives work, then, precisely by limiting our ability to imagine liberation in such a way that equality is rendered synonymous with the ability to occupy protected subject positions. However, these protected positions—such as that of the white police officer, or the wealthy Chinese one percent—can exist only through the wielding of racial power over others.

While I have limited my analysis to multicultural redemption narratives in the context of Asians and specifically the film *Crazy Rich Asians* for the purposes of this article, I in no way mean to suggest multicultural redemption narratives are confined exclusively to them. Indeed, scholars might consider the way in which other populations are interpellated by multicultural redemption narratives, as well as consider the role multicultural media will play in the unfolding present. For example, how will ongoing efforts to resist anti-black violence, ICE deportations, and other forms of statesanctioned racism interact with a liberal public enmeshed in a representational media environment that celebrates instead of chastises difference?

Hollywood has never and will never stand for the liberation of Asian Americans, only for the structural adjustment of ongoing racial violence. Crazy Rich Asians' multicultural incorporation of Asians reveals not a more ethical way of rendering Asians legible and represented, but the impossibility of ethically doing so under the current regime of multicultural violence. The compulsory desire to be included into white mainstream venues not only produces a cruel faith in the possibility for assimilation but results in a willingness to sideline black and other marginalized people as a result. Divesting hope in multicultural redemption creates the possibility to consider alternatives to representative legibility as the telos of anti-racist politics. Only an uncompromising refusal of reconciling with an endemically racist society will construct efforts to abolish multicultural institutions without compromising with their insidious ability to dictate the terms of resistance. Moreover, my hope is that it can enable scholars to think more expansively both about what liberation looks like, as well as about the way in which dreams of liberation are warped and distorted by desires to occupy power. Put differently, if multicultural redemption narratives hold sway because of the way they discipline oppressed people to desire power, investigating the places in which we desperately clutch power may enable us to apprehend the possibilities for letting go.

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å Bio

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Crip Twitter and Utopic Feeling: How Disabled Twitter Users Reorganize Public Affects

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ABSTRACT Conceptually, online activism remains a divisive concept: detractors decry it as lowcommitment "slacktivism," and proponents argue that the Internet is a powerful platform for organizing. Particularly for disabled persons, the Internet provides new avenues for engagement and organizing work by allowing disabled persons in disparate places to connect with each other. While the intersection of disability activism and online activism remains underexplored, existing literature remains anchored to the notion that disabled online activism's greatest impact is in organizing physical protests and actions. This paper scrutinizes the actual work and impact of three disabled Twitter activists, and wages an argument based on how Twitter activists make other users feel. Particularly, this paper synthesizes affect theory with Althusser's notion of "interpellation" and revises Michael Warner's theory of "publics" to argue that such disabled Twitter activists and their followers mutually generate networks distinguished by shared feelings (affective networks, as this paper terms them), and that these networks are constantly being renegotiated and transforming the feelings of their members. The paper makes four key interventions: first, it writes against Michael Warner's initial reluctance to include the Internet in his theory of publics, by arguing that Twitter followings model Warner's publics. Second, it performs close readings to describe both how Twitter users' writings generate affective networks and what activist impact these affective networks have. Third, it identifies and describes radical optimism and the utopic work of "demanding" as constituents of Twitter users' affective networks. Finally, this paper examines and describes how affective networks shift with each tweet, and how such writings transform the feelings that constitute those affective networks. Arguing in part from my own subjectivity as a disabled Twitter user, I contend that Twitter enables disabled users to organize their feelings according to the feelings they want to have, and the feelings they think they ought to have.

Introduction

So, as I lay there, unable to march, hold up a sign, shout a slogan that would be heard, or be visible in any traditional capacity as a political being, the central question of Sick Woman Theory formed: How do you throw a brick through the window of a bank if you can't get out of bed? $\frac{1}{2}$

What can disabled protest look like? That's the question to which Johanna Hedva demands answers in her "Sick Woman Theory." Hedva responds to Arendtian political theory, which has informed much of contemporary liberal political consensus. Arendt suggests in *The Human Condition* that the main ground on which society wages political struggle is the public sphere; Hedva answers that gaining admission to the public is not as easy as Arendt assumes—that racial discrimination, ableism, and misogyny forces marginalized actors out of public view, and silences their politics.

As a disabled historian (though not precisely a historian of disability), I understand disability as an archival condition, a condition that shapes access to the archive. As will become clear, too, I understand social media platforms to be no less archival than a library's manuscript collections, and just as replete with the production of silences. I share Hedva's wariness about the notion of a public sphere (and understand that the public sphere is often the site whose materials accumulate in the archive, producing archival

silence). I also worry about the facile idea that social media offers unfettered access to a boundless public, as if the politics of Internet usage and social media access are not reflective of access politics in the material realm ("meatspace"). I am seeking to understand those access politics, then, to understand not so much how disability shapes Internet access, but instead how disability shapes the kinds of activism that disabled people engage in on the Internet. I am not seeking to provide an exhaustive description, but instead to use a narrow assemblage of sources to gesture towards one possibility of what disabled activist work can look like.

I answer that disabled activists use Twitter to accomplish the work of hope. In this paper, I examine three disabled activists' Twitter presences to argue that the work of Twitter activism is best understood as work at the level of affect, and works by the unit of the "utopic demand." First, I think about how these Twitter activists hail audience in particular ways to establish the concept of a bounded network that is formed through shared affective orientations. Second, I examine the ways that activists' followers engage with activists' tweets—liking, retweeting, and commenting, which I argue is how followers affirm activists' tweets and renegotiate their own affective orientations. Third, I argue that these disabled activists engage the affective networks they cultivate by making utopic demands (demands that gesture towards the necessarily more just future), and by compelling affective reorientations among followers. Finally, in a coda, I reflect on the affective impact that these activists have had on me, and what that has meant for me as a subject entering into history.

Background & Methodology

As above, I start with the archival question—how does disability shape social media activism, and implicitly, entry into the archive? To clarify, I am not simply speaking of disabled activists across domains but specifically of disabled activists whose advocacy centers on disability issues. I offer the reminder that while the Internet is a tool that has expanded access to audiences, Internet access also mirrors and exacerbates existing deficiencies in access. Moreover, even where access exists, we cannot assume homogeneity. Rather, we should understand geography, class, race, gender, and the precise type of disability that an activist and/or their audience has as factors that shape what social media activism looks like. This is the kind of descriptive and analytical work I engage in here.

It remains an open question: how does Internet activism interact with other kinds of activism, such as the more conventionally imagined bodies-in-the-streets forms of protest? Filippo Trevisan found in his 2017 study of an anti-austerity campaign in the United Kingdom that social media activism mobilized online activists for in-person actions—that far from replacing other types of activism, social media activism facilitates them. The existing literature also attempts to evaluate the "effectiveness" of online activism—trevisan's study is a prime example. I would argue that a far "thicker" and more substantive critique is offered by examining the form and content that Internet activism takes on, in order to interrogate the assumptions about efficacity that such questions are rooted in. I offer an implicit critique of those categories here as well.

Studying the Internet usage of disabled Americans is fraught. A 2011 Pew Internet Research Project report found that only 54 percent of disabled adults use the Internet, compared to 81 percent of the general American population, defining disabled adults as those who have "serious difficulty" hearing, seeing, walking, making decisions, dressing or bathing, doing errands alone, or using the Internet. Even this data needs to be troubled, as academics have suggested, because such surveys are based on landline telephone usage, encouraging the data to skew older and towards persons who are not hard of

hearing. But another Pew report signals the importance and benefits of Internet access for disabled persons—particularly those who are outside patient-support frameworks that may exist in cities and better-resourced locales. A report about chronic illness and Internet usage noted

One person wrote, "[An] online support group helped me learn about the disease and provided comfort in knowing that my symptoms were not 'just in my head,' and helped me take steps to adjust to living with a chronic condition." Another shared, "I live in a small town and it is helpful to be able to use the internet to find others that have the same condition as I do." $\overline{}$

Indeed, while not well-documented, preliminary findings affirm the general sense that Internet usage usefully counters the feelings of isolation and alienation associated with being disabled. A 2006 paper found physically disabled individuals reported, on average, levels of "social inadequacy and alienation" 15 percent higher, and levels of "selfalienation" a remarkable 96 percent higher, than levels reported by the general nondisabled population. An earlier paper from 2003 found in a small study that computer and Internet access profoundly increased disabled persons' sense of having satisfactory social contact, and a 2013 paper suggested this was true even after ten years of technological innovation, and held across age groups. These quantitative results conclude that there is a measurable reduction in loneliness among disabled Internet users as compared to non-users.

These numbers are heartening, but what I am more interested in is qualitative, granular evidence about what social media offers to disabled individuals. In marshalling that evidence, I draw upon my own subject position as a disabled Twitter user. When I joined Twitter in 2016, I began to follow disability activists. I also noticed who they tended to retweet or respond to and became more attuned to an ecology of disability activism. That ecology, admittedly rooted in my biases as a disabled Asian American with a particular interest in questions of law and journalism, has generated this selection. Other selections, more inclusive of Black, indigenous, trans, and Latinx organizing are necessary, but I want to be sensitive of the political grammars that are rooted in these identities, to not claim or examine these grammars without the critical intimacy and extended exposure that my years following these particular activists has cultivated.

That said, the users I've selected—Matthew Cortland, Mia Mingus, and Alice Wong—tend to follow each other and others engaged in disability rights discourses. They are active members of the virtual disability activist community, meaning that their presences are vibrant, constantly shifting, and engaged with current events to an exceptional degree. For these reasons, they are ideal candidates for this type of analysis. That said, I am wary of attempting to extrapolate because this analysis (as above) necessarily leaves holes, such as the particularities of indigenous, Black, and Latinx organizing or those of disabled trans organizing. What this analysis motions towards is one of the ways that disabled activism functions online and how Twitter specifically facilitates that, which may at least inform broader understandings of such activism.

Table 1. A description of the activists examined here.

User Name	Twitter Handle	Description 10
Matthew Cortland	@mattbc	White US-based attorney, identifies as disabled, chronically ill.
Mia Mingus	@miamingus	Queer disabled US-based Korean transracial adoptee focused on disability justice $ \\$
Alice	@SFdirewolf	$\label{thm:condition} A \ disabled \ US-based \ Asian \ American \ disability \ activist, tweets$

How does this analysis proceed? It examines tweets as historical texts, as primary and secondary source materials, underwritten with motivations and making impacts in the world that receives them. In addition, it requires a critical lens that encourages us as readers to "brush against the grain," to recognize that truth is generated by victors—those who have survived and been able to make themselves heard. Twitter and other social media platforms have made some disabled voices more publicly available. But the voices recuperated from the Twitter archive—despite its contemporaneity and apparent accessibility—do not include the voices of those disabled individuals who cannot use the Internet at all, nor does it include many poor individuals, who cannot afford the apparatuses or services necessary for using Twitter. As much as my method attends to the voices that have made it to the computer screen, it is as important to my method to think about the voices that do not, and the irrecuperable lacunae such absences leave.

Among the methodological choices this paper makes is to consider "disability" as a broad-basis term, to not be more specific about the specific communities that fall under the coalitional term "disability activists" by considering individually, for example, chronically-ill activists, activists with cerebral palsy, blind or hard of sight activists. Such analyses, more grounded in the particular shape of specific disabled activist communities is necessary, but this paper takes a broad approach to gesture towards one of the ways that a wider lens of focus allows this particular methodological commonality—the shared work of hope, as I argue—to emerge.

Emergent Affective Networks

A good starting point for understanding how disabled activists use Twitter is their own words. Individually, the activists assembled here have generated a fair amount of public writing that conceptualizes for themselves what social media presence and social media writing does in the world—what impacts such writing might have, and who the audiences might be. These activists, despite their common focus, have different understandings of impact and audience. Mia Mingus writes, "i do not write for able bodied people. i write for myself and disabled folks-especially fellow disabled queer POC. $\frac{12}{12}$ i write to leave evidence, break isolation, heal and give name/power to our people's experiences. i do not write to educate the privileged." 13 Mingus suggests that her work is not intended to be outward-facing. Rather, her writing is meant to be an act of strengthening what she envisions as her community—disabled queer people of color. This is a potent formulation, particularly because of the way it draws the boundaries of audience. Mingus refers to writing, not tweeting—and rather than naming her followers, who are presumably not all disabled queer people of color, Mingus refers to that group as "our people." That is, Mingus conceives of her Twitter writings as part of her larger in-group-oriented writing project. For Mingus, using Twitter—with its ability to follow and unfollow, block and retweet—is at once shouting in a public square and whispering amongst comrades. Private-public divides dissolve on Twitter, as online more broadly: users write for themselves and each other, if in a way that is searchable and readable to the non-user public.

This is rather different from the way Matthew Cortland orients himself. He writes, "I know y'all know air travel sux, but I tweet about traveling as a disabled, chronically ill person because I'm not sure people realize that if it's bad for ableds, we are .fucked." Here, Cortland is not making an explicit statement about audience, as Mingus does. But audience is still imbricated in the text of this tweet. Cortland first refers to "y'all [who know air travel sux]," which might be understood as any person who has traveled by plane,

a group that includes both Cortland's able-bodied and disabled followers. Yet Cortland makes an rhetorical turn, then referring to "people" and then "we." There are many ways to parse this tweet, but one might be to understand Cortland as directing his attention to two different audiences—one that is largely (but not exclusively) able-bodied and familiar with the nuisances of air travel, and one that is disabled. That becomes especially clear in the use of "ableds," in-group language that hails disabled persons. Unlike Mingus, Cortland does not explicitly claim an audience in this tweet (or perhaps claims multiple audiences), and seems to tweet for both disabled and able-bodied readers. But like Mingus, Cortland hails his own community, using a first-person plural pronoun. Cortland's tweets appear to trouble the public-private divide that Hedva decried in "Sick Woman Theory," generating contradiction and paradox. In thinking through and resolving that paradox, I gesture towards understanding Cortland and Mingus not as speaking either to "the public" or to in-groups, but rather, as speaking to and constructing specific "publics," as Michael Warner has characterized such audiences.

Michael Warner writes of a public as being an "ongoing space of encounter for discourse." ¹⁵ While Warner insisted that the Internet (at the time of his writing) had not yet developed to provide the kinds of temporality necessary for ongoing discourse and thus, for the creation of a public, I find that Twitter, delineating followers, likes, and retweets as it does, models Warner's theory of publics. In exploring publics and the process of recognizing publics, I also draw upon Althusser's theory of interpellation, specifically the notion of hailing or interpellation, here adjusted to reflect hailing not by ideology *per se*, but instead hailing by affect. Such hailing is the process of mutual recognition—the process by which, here, a Twitter user recognizes a sentiment with other users, and incorporates themselves into the sphere organized by that user's sentiments. ¹⁶

Cortland's and Mingus's Twitter followers constitute "a public" in being characterized by self-organization, the relationship that exists among strangers (each follows Cortland or Mingus respectively), and by the fact that Cortland's and Mingus's speech is simultaneously "personal and impersonal." 17 Naturally following from Warner's theory of publics, we understand that Twitter generates a new form of sociality by relying on the commonality of feeling—shared affective states—rather than textual discourses, per se. I term this genre of sociality the affective network. The term draws on a rich body of scholarship on affect, which I use here as akin to Raymond Williams's structures of feeling. Williams defines structures of feelings as "thought as felt and feeling as thought . . . a set, with specific internal relations, at once interlocking and in tension.... a social experience which is still in process, often...taken to be private, idiosyncratic, and even isolating, but which in analysis (though rarely otherwise) has its emergent, connecting, and dominant characteristics, indeed its specific hierarchies." 18 I find this formulation (taken up more recently by scholars like Lauren Berlant) useful because of its insistence that even apparently "private" social experiences (or feelings) have "emergent, connecting, and dominant characteristics," indeed, that affects are types of infrastructural feelings, that texts of all kinds (here, tweets) impact feelings not only at the level of the individual, but in coherent and systematic ways. Affective networks (departing from the neurological sense) here signal networks organized by shared emotions, desires, and impetuses. Affective networks signal a specific form of the public, the "relation among strangers" being the relation of sharing an emotional investment. 19

While affective networks account for Mingus and Cortland, ostensibly, they cannot account for Alice Wong, who wrote in 2014 "I may not be able to join <u>#Ferguson</u> protests in my area because of my disability, but I tweet my dissent! <u>#DisabilitySolidarity</u>." Here, Wong does not appear to hail any public at all, which suggests that this tweet does not function on the basis of an affective network. I return to Hedva's central question, "How

do you throw a brick through the window of a bank if you can't get out of bed?" 21 For Wong, the answer seems to be "tweet[ing one's] dissent!" 22

Many analysts would register such a tweet as little more than a token act of support slacktivism, minimal-impact forms of virtue-signaling. 23 But such a register fails, first by failing to consider the particular constraints that disability can place on forms of political action, and second by misunderstanding the metrics by which social movement can be judged. Social movements tend to be judged by materiality—by funds generated in support of a cause, or the number of bodies that march in protest. 24 Yet in the age of the Internet, social movements far exceed the kinds of locality that these metrics presume. That there were protests in San Francisco for a murder occurring in Ferguson suggests the power of the Internet to deterritorialize social movements. Moreover, funding and number of bodies are really each proxies for the goal of activism—to put pressure on authorities in service of an action (here, the protests may have put pressure in service of any number of things, from abolition of the police to prosecution of Darren Wilson, Michael Brown's murderer). Wong's tweet may in fact serve to put pressure on authorities—and may also act as a public commitment to a political position. Moreover, the use of hashtags explicitly places Wong's tweet in conversation with the trending hashtag #Ferguson, which allowed users to search and read all tweets with that hashtag. Wong also uses #DisabilitySolidarity, which meant anyone reading either #Ferguson or #DisabilitySolidarity would find the tweet; explicitly, Wong's use of hashtags connects the two movements and in fact, merges the "publics" generated by these hashtags; the hashtags here play off of Twitter's own infrastructure to connect the affective networks that #DisabilitySolidarity and #Ferguson organize.

What do affective networks do?

It emerges, then, that social movements are rooted in affective networks—if we find that social movements tend to put pressure on groups in power in service of seeing a certain choice being made, then it follows that movements require some degree of shared desire amongst their constituents. Here, I think about what work "likes" and "retweets" do, and what the affective impact is of such engagement between activists and their Twitter followers. I then think about the affect of such activism itself. I begin by tracking the discourse around the 2016 United States presidential election.

In the aftermath of the 2016 election, the activists this paper follows were not very active on Twitter. Among those who were, however, was Disability Visibility Project. DVP was active throughout November 10th, 2016, electing to organize a live Twitter chat on postelection organizing, as the account posted, "If you have the energy & want connect w/ disabled folks, join <u>#CripTheVote</u> TODAY, 7 pm ET. Let's see <u>#WhatsNext</u>."25 DVP was engaged, virtually, in much of the same work that activists were doing outside the Internet -creating safe-spaces. Those safe-spaces are composed of affective networks, as DVP indicates in explicitly hailing other disabled people—people who share identity groups, but also those who "want [to] connect," indicating shared desire. DVP also hailed an alternative network, however—those groups who shared an affective sense of grief and exhaustion, tweeting, "It's ok if you're not ready to think about #WhatsNext and need time to just be. Your survival and existence matters. #CripTheVote." 26 The public that DVP is hailing is not composed of complacent individuals who are disinterested in protest -rather, DVP is hailing those who are "not ready" to protest and "need time." In this way, Disability Visibility Project attenuates the contours of the network it is tapping. Moreover, these networks are engaged in the active process of mutual recognition that Althusser denotes as hailing: users actively engaged in reaffirming the messaging of

Disability Visibility Project, liking and retweeting each tweet, although each tweet generated very few replies. 27

Filippo Trevisan found in *Disability Advocacy Online* that organizations tended to use Facebook to generate commentary from their followers and to disseminate information about protests. ²⁸ That is operatively distinct from the work being done on Twitter, where likes and retweets do not generate commentary, but serve to reaffirm Disability Visibility Project's messaging and to indicate that a tweet expresses a sentiment that is appreciated or shared. In other words, the very act of retweeting or liking a tweet signals to Twitter users an active stake in the affective community organized by that Twitter persona and their affect.

What may be interesting, too, is how different activists strike the balance of affective networking (that is, generating and hailing an affective network) with organizing. While Disability Visibility Project may be understood as taking a two-pronged approach (indicated by hailing two different networks), Mia Mingus renders the processes of grief and protest as two components of a singular operation. On November 9, 2016, after the election results had become public, Mingus tweeted, "feeling deep sadness and grief for what is, mixed with determination and purpose for what can be. sending love and courage to all our folks." Mingus is clear in having a deep sense of grief over the results of the election, but perhaps more broadly, over the national moral and political consensus — "what is," as Mingus puts it. That grief, Mingus clarifies, does not exclude political action, much as Disability Visibility Project had hailed those "not ready to think about #WhatsNext." Mingus expresses hope for a new political consensus and for the power of protest politics— "what can be." As such, the discourse Mingus engages with suggests a new way of thinking about the very work of activism—radical optimism.

Twitter and the Work of Hope

Feminist labor scholar Kathi Weeks writes of utopia that

by providing a vision or glimmer of a better world, particularly one grounded in the real-possible, the utopia can serve to animate political desire, to engage our aspirations to new and more gratifying forms of collectivity. Beyond provoking desire, utopias can also inspire the political imagination, encourage us to stretch that neglected faculty and expand our sense of what might be possible in our social and political relations. 30

In drawing from that understanding of what utopia demands of and provokes in us, what I interrogate here is how disabled Twitter users, in engaging with affective networks, also do affective work—the work of "animat[ing] political desire and "expand[ing] our sense of what might be possible." Scholars of utopia, including Weeks, tend to understand utopia as a condition of impossibility—indeed, the very etymology of the word indicates the bright line standard of utopia. Utopia means "no place;" if a condition becomes possible or extant, it violates the very standard of what utopia is. But I suggest that the *utopic demand*, unlike utopia itself, gestures towards horizons of possibility, and that disabled Twitter users engage in such demands as a kind of affective work—the work of envisioning new futures.

Earlier this year, on November 11, Mia Mingus wrote on Twitter, "we are not asking people to show up for a day at the polls, we are asking people to change their lives. we are supporting each other to change our lives with love, integrity, care and compassion. and urgency. we can do this." ³¹ Particularly of interest to me is the notion of "asking people to change their lives—" that is, Mingus demands of not only her followers, but of all people engaged with disability activism (here, Mingus hails a new public) to radically reorient

their lives in ways that resist neoliberal drives to individuation and instead express an ethic of care. Notably, the reorientation Mingus demands is not really a material one, as might be manifest in "show[ing] up for a day at the polls." Rather, it is an affective and ideological reorientation—reorienting one's political and emotional values to privilege "love, integrity, care and compassion" over self-interest and short-term thinking.

This is an admittedly different affect than the one implicated by Mingus's earlier tweets cited here. There is one way of reading each tweet as hailing and reflecting a unique public. But as Warner has written, "it is not texts themselves that create publics, but the concatenation of texts through time." With that measure of temporality, it naturally follows that rather than each tweet recognizing a different public, publics can shift—that the affective network Mingus hails is capable of change. And that change is not limited to changing boundaries of who is within or outside of Mingus's affective network—but in fact, the affect itself changes. What I am suggesting is that users identify with Mingus not only because they share her views, but because they hope to share her views—that with each text Mingus generates and with each demand she makes, followers reorient themselves in relation to Mingus's sentiments, and their own views change (not necessarily mirroring Mingus's, but changing in some way) because Mingus's affects are not consistently the same.

Mingus writes later in the same Twitter thread, "stop asking other people to 'hold you accountable.' that is your responsibility. it's labor we all must learn how to do for ourselves. it's our responsibility to learn how to self-assess & course-correct. stop putting that labor on others. we can support each other." 33 The utopic demand differentiates itself from utopia in precisely this way: where utopia is an ideal future that is also understood to be impossible, the utopic demand is a demand for a future that can come to pass, one that even must come to pass, such as the urgent need for learning "to self-assess & course-correct."

In *Cruising Utopia*, José Esteban Muñoz thinks about queerness as "always in the horizon." Alison Kafer writing in *Feminist*, *Queer*, *Crip* writes of "crip futures: futures that embrace disabled people, futures that imagine disability differently, futures that support multiple ways of being. . . . In imagining crip futures . . . I mean possibility, unpredictability, promise." This instability and unknowability is the nature of utopia—of queerness as in the horizon, and of crip futures that are continually deferred. Indeed, even Bloch's concrete utopias are utopic, which is to say, themselves always in the horizon, even as they are the work of "educated hope." The utopic demand is the unit by which disabled social media activists do their work, and the building block of contemporary activism that struggles mightily against accelerating precarity in the political present. The utopic demand is also rhetorically and logically distinct from even the most concrete of utopias: while utopia poses a form of radical critique that can never be fulfilled (this is part of utopia's ontology), the utopic demand offers a movement through impasse that *can or must* come to pass.

I gesture towards understanding activism as much more than "actions in the public sphere," as Arendt understands "the political." In seeking to define an activism that is not premised on forms of exclusion or management of who may enter "a public," I turn towards affects. I turn towards activism that works on the emotional and sentimental level. I suggest that activism is not limited to marching bodies or bricks thrown through bank windows, but that the work of dreaming better futures, of sharing those dreams, and assembling networks of fellow-feelers constitutes a kind of activism—and may even be the foundation of all political change.

Coda

This paper began by provoking a question about possibility—what is possible for the disabled protester? How does the disabled person protest? The answer Hedva comes to is that sickness is an embodied form of protest—that being ill is a condition of being against the state, against socially oppressive forms. 37 The answer I come to is that disabled protesters have the capacity to protest literally at our fingertips, or at the fingertips of our caretakers. I argue that among the many forms of protest available to disabled persons is affective work—the work of thinking and imagining beautiful futures and insisting that such a future is possible. I maintain that activism on Twitter is not merely slacktivism, but that Twitter generates new forms of sociality where categories of what has constituted activism and "the public" fails us. Twitter allows users to organize themselves not only according to the people they know or the identities they hold, but according to their political and emotional orientations. Finally, I contend that to speak of emotion in this way is to try and put a fine point on a slippery phenomenon. At once, humans have emotions and we recognize them in others. We share our emotions, setting off chains of emotional reorientation within our own networks. Apparently, emotions exist inside of us, yet they also seem to organize us as an outside force. The activists I've examined here (and activists-at-large, I believe) do complex and sophisticated kinds of emotion- in organizing and transforming their affective networks.

A disabled Twitter user named Beth Caldwell wrote once that "if the advocacy is keeping people alive, then the advocacy is worth doing." Matthew Cortland, quoting Caldwell, goes to on to assert that this is the philosophy that keeps him going, that Caldwell had said it to him before she died. I read Caldwell's philosophy and Cortland's endorsement of it as speaking to the physical necessity of maintaining life, but also to the affect and desire of wanting to keep living. Under the current political consensus in the United States, and globally where neoliberal governments remain entrenched in power, disabled persons are fighting to stay alive, eking out just enough money to buy one's medications for the month or to keep the heat on. "Keeping people alive" is a high bar under these conditions—and that is only speaking of physical life. To speak of online advocacy in an era of constant physical precarity for marginalized persons can feel like farce.

I have thought throughout this paper as a scholar—a disabled one perhaps, but one who is rigorously deferent to the norms of capacity set by the academy. At times, in its granularity, this work has become anthropological. But I am not a scholar from the outside looking in. I am instead a scholar writing about subjects near to him in position. I am writing from a very close place. And in exhibiting the kinds of reflexivity demanded by the academy, as well as to offer some consideration of the concrete stakes that affective networks offer, I move now to thinking a little bit harder about my own subjectivity as a disabled, queer South Asian person.

I earlier contended that while voices captured in the archive are central to my method, the voices that could not be recovered also demand attention. The line that divides these groups is not a bright one, nor is it random. These are the voices, as Hedva contends, that remain excluded from the Arendtian public sphere in life—and as historical scholarship has taught me, those are also the voices which become irrecuperable from the historical archive in death. While the publics generated by Twitter weaken that exclusionary power, it stands to reason that it also reifies that exclusion further in other ways. In thinking about my own subjectivity, I think about why I stand on one side of the line and not the other—and I think about how easily I might have ended up on the other side. I think about how hard it was, in my rural, white high school, to keep myself alive.

It was at some point late in high school that I first read Johanna Hedva's "Sick Woman Theory" and failed to understand it. I did not understand how the words came together. But what I did understand then was how it made me feel—that being disabled, brown, and

queer was not limited to my individual experience of navigating an ableist, racist, and heterosexist world. That I did not embody problems, but that the world might. That is to say, I found myself forming an affective connection to Hedva's public persona.

I joined Twitter in 2016. It should come as no surprise that I immediately began following activists like Alice Wong or Matthew Cortland—because Twitter became a place where I could organize my life according to affects, not people. Despite the names associated with Twitter accounts, Twitter personas are performances that produce affective and ideological spectacles. And more than organizing my Twitter feed around the feelings of others, I organized my feed around the feelings I wanted—empowerment, camaraderie, and optimism—feelings that keep people alive, but also, the exact opposite of the feelings the world tends to produce in disabled people. 39

What I have struggled most to do in this writing is to convey the impact of Twitter activism. Activism that is as diffuse as this, and activism that does not organize physical protests, is difficult to track. Even more difficult is tracking or identifying emotions in a way that matters to the academy. In attempting to do so, I have wrangled the bodies of affect and "publics" theory and often contradicted these bodies in order to suit my ends.

But I contend that these are problems of language, not meaning. What has never troubled me in this writing is the supposition that the disabled activism enacted online is meaningful, or that such advocacy keeps people alive. Activism works in the affective register of hope—by producing optimism for a utopic future that can or even must come to pass. And in the publics generated online—on Twitter—such optimism flows more freely and more accessibly than in so much else of the world. Plainly, that is the work and affect that keeps people alive. It certainly did for me.

Acknowledgements

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- 37. Hedva, "Sick Woman Theory." 🔁
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David Zeglen, "The Organic and the Conjunctural in Historicizing Basic Income: Response to Zamora and Jäger," *Lateral* 8.2 (2019).

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Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019) Responses Universal Basic Income

The Organic and the Conjunctural in Historicizing Basic Income: Response to Zamora and Jäger

David Zeglen

ABSTRACT In response to Zamora and Jäger's intellectual history critique of my original essay, I reiterate the methodological necessity of grounding a historical study of basic income in a Marxist framework that considers both the organic and conjunctural. This approach illuminates the complexities of basic income as common sense under capitalism while illustrating the limits and opportunities for Left organizing around the idea of basic income.

Daniel Zamora and Anton Jäger responded to my original essay with a succinct intellectual history of a specific conjuncture from approximately the 1930s to the early 1960s that contained a dominant and emergent set of ideas about social justice. First, Zamora and Jäger note that during this period the dominant conception of social justice in public debates on addressing poverty was defined as an expansive welfare state that provided programs addressing healthcare, education, food, and housing as the social rights of citizens. According to Zamora and Jäger, while basic income plans were also suggested, it was always in addition to proposals for an expansive welfare state and often tied to full employment schemes. Second, a set of ideas began to take form during this period that subsequently became dominant from the mid-to-late 1960s into the present. For Zamora and Jäger, this shift primarily involved the ascent of the notion that the price system, rather than the state, ought to be the central mechanism for redistributing goods in a society. Based on this logic, policies addressing poverty therefore needed to guarantee access to the market via strict cash transfers that wouldn't disrupt market forces, such as Milton Friedman's proposal for a Negative Income Tax, which lacked work guarantees provided by the state. Zamora and Jäger conclude their response by pointing out that this ascending neoliberalism dramatically altered the meaning of social justice and that this meaning is still with us today. As evidence, Zamora and Jäger point to contemporary proposals for a basic income based on strict cash transfers that are coupled with the continued dismantling of government services, like Governor Mike Dunleavy's proposal to modify the Alaska Permanent Fund.

Zamora and Jäger's conjunctural analysis is intended to service a perceived deficiency in my argument, namely my claim that basic income is "common sense." As Zamora and Jäger argue in their response, "stating [that basic income is common sense] overlooks the entire intellectual history of the idea, and how the proposal only became 'common sense' after conceptions of work, poverty, social justice, redistribution or the state underwent some drastic changes . . . As leftists, our job should be to denaturalize power relations and not always take for granted what passes as 'common sense." Based on Zamora and Jäger's operationalization of the term "common sense"—which, based on their usage in their

response I interpret to mean the ideas that become internalized as self-evident and natural truths over time—I find no general fault with their argument that leftists should denaturalize power relations. However, this is not the definition of "common sense" that I used in my original essay, and consequently my argument leads to a different conclusion than the one Zamora and Jäger reach.

In my essay, I used a Gramscian definition which holds that common sense is made up of contradictory tendencies with a variety of origins. For instance, objective thought forms originate from the lived material experiences of individuals who are embedded in capitalist social relations. As they labor, they constitute the corresponding form of consciousness that emerges from these social relations as a part of common sense. Although capitalist social relations give rise to reified expressions of human labor, workers nonetheless experience these reified expressions objectively in their direct experiences as workers, rather than as a form of false consciousness. Common sense is also made up of "good sense," which involves creative and experimental ideas based on reason, self-reflection, empiricism, and logic, rather than emotion, instinct, or group-think. Finally, common sense entails ideas and embodied practices that originate from ideological state apparatuses such as the education system, the church, the culture industries, and so forth. Thus, common sense is an incoherent and historically specific assemblage of ideas and practices.

This is hardly a definition that takes for granted what passes for common sense or risks falling into an "empty transhistorical celebration." Indeed, the strength of using a Gramscian definition of common sense is that it allows room for the kind of conjunctural analysis and intellectual history that Zamora and Jäger provide to be integrated into a larger historical framework that allows us to better "denaturalize power relations . . . [and] begin to challenge it based on this knowledge." 4 As my essay and introduction to the forum argue, various forms of the state wage have been proposed and enacted as long as capitalism has existed, and the relationship between the two is more than a coincidence since crises of social reproduction emerge when the economic contradiction between wages and the surplus of workers is intensified. Furthermore, I suggested that there was a specific economic crisis of social reproduction that maps with the conjuncture Zamora and Jäger's argument about the discursive changes in language over social justice exists within. In other words, integrating my historical analysis of the enduring structural relationship between capitalism and basic income as an objective thought form and my argument about the crisis of social reproduction with Zamora and Jäger's conjunctural explanation of shifting definitions about basic income and social justice would help facilitate a materialist explanation for why, in this intellectual history Zamora and Jäger give us, ideas changed the way that they did. As Gramsci noted, if an analysis does not situate the intellectual history of an idea into a dialectical dependency on the structural or organic logic of capitalism, immediate causes are treated as the only effective ones, resulting in an excess of ideologism. 5 Indeed, as I suggest below, there is a steep price to pay in exchange for the excess of ideologism that often accompanies intellectual histories. In order to minimize repeating arguments from my original essay in their entirety, I would like to briefly mention two interrelated points that are worth returning to if we wish to challenge common sense understandings of basic income.

My first point is about social movements. Zamora and Jäger conclude their response with the assertion that once we recognize how the meaning of basic income changed over time, we can then challenge these proposals based on this knowledge. This notion seems too close to the problem I previously mentioned in my essay about how objective thought forms are embedded in common sense. Although any ideology critique that shows the historicity of a given concept or idea is an important achievement, it by no means banishes

the weight of these mystifications in the minds of individuals so long as they are anchored in real economic relationships as objective thought forms. In short, transcending objective thought forms requires more than understanding the historicity of a concept. I theorized basic income as a state wage parallel to the wage form of the market, and similarly supported and critiqued how social movements often fight over wage levels within the confines of the wage form. What I argued in my essay is that moments of good sense need to be extracted from the incoherence of common sense and linked together with narratives already used by social movements that advocate for reforms on the level of the objective thought form, such as wage increases—and for our purposes, a basic income—in order to transcend the objective thought form itself. This is why I advocated that the notion of "surplus" from arguments for basic income be put in motion with the concept of surplus populations.

While the period Zamora and Jäger examine in their response contained many progressive policy ideas developed by economists, historians, and politicians that were implemented in some form by the state, it should not be forgotten that the state itself was also pressured by various social movements that had their own ideas about what a more just society should look like, ideas which did not necessarily include maintaining a capitalist state. Thus, my essay focuses on the centrality of struggle "from below" and proposes meeting social movements where they are at by suggesting how they can realign their goals via the concept of surplus in order to transcend the state wage form, i.e. basic income. This is clearly not advocacy for a "spontaneously legitimate demand," as Zamora and Jäger have characterized my argument, but something altogether more nuanced.

Second, my argument about surplus is also an argument about how the state is a capitalist state and not just a state under capitalism. This distinction is important because while the capitalist state maintains a relative autonomy in relation to the social totality that allows for progressive social reforms to be negotiated and enacted, it is nonetheless also true that the capitalist state is essential to the reproduction of capitalism. This is what my essay addresses via the concept of surplus populations. I have already recapitulated this concept's relevance to the present conjuncture by drawing upon Endnotes excellent work on the subject in my original essay. But another example, this time from Capital, Volume 1, might also help illuminate the centrality of the capitalist state's role in ensuring surplus populations in its quest to reproduce capitalism. In the last chapter of the final section of Capital, Volume 1, Marx notes how the availability of land in the colonies of Western Europe (made available through the violence of colonialism) were used by workers to escape the horrors of wage labor in the factory back home. As Marx correctly pointed out, this created a problem for capital:

The great beauty of capitalist production consists in this, that it not only constantly reproduces the wage-labourer as a wage labourer, but also produces a relative surplus population of wage-labourers in proportion to the accumulation of capital... But in the colonies this beautiful illusion is torn aside. There, the absolute numbers of the population increase much more quickly than in the mother country, because many workers enter the colonial world as ready-made adults, and still the labour-market is always understocked. The law of the supply and demand of labour collapses completely.²

In short, so long as workers can own land and produce for themselves, capitalist accumulation is extremely difficult. In any case, Marx illustrates the problem of "the anticapitalist cancer of the colonies" in order to emphasize how the capitalist state ends up solving it, which is to set an artificially high price on the land independent of supply and demand. This effectively compels the immigrant worker to toil in the factory for wage labor so that they can eventually earn enough to buy their own land. Finally, the mass

importation of "paupers from Europe into the colonies" keeps the wage-labor market full for the capitalists, which necessarily includes a floating surplus population to keep pressure on employed laborers. 10 And so it ever has been under capital. As a consequence, no amount of welfare policy reform intended to curtail the space in which market competition exists can address the problem of surplus populations since it is integral to the functioning of capitalism. But this is precisely the appeal a basic income has as an objective thought form, since it is often framed as a promissory note to exit the labor market, if only provisionally. Therefore, a linkage of the concept of surplus to surplus populations offers an opportunity for the development of class consciousness against capitalism and the capitalist state. Relatedly, as my brief summary of Marx's final chapter about faraway colonies suggests, capitalism is a global system. As such, any "national" welfare policy ought to exceed the confines of the nation-state in solidarity with a global surplus population, a point I stressed in my essay. Perhaps another nugget of good sense that can be extracted from the common sense of universal basic income is that we as leftists need to take literally what it means to have a universal welfare program.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that, as I have demonstrated above and in my original essay, the strength of a Marxist analysis is that it reveals the ways that a social formation is conditioned by the invariant and organic features of a dominant mode of production. This methodological principle of starting from the totality matters because as left scholars our political strategies flow from our analyses and incomplete analyses lead to incomplete political strategies. While conjunctural intellectual histories are useful, they can only lead to limited political strategies if they are not fully situated within an order of determinations that range from the local all the way to the most abstract level of generality. This is why I originally chose to analyze basic income from the vantage point of "ideology from below" in the capitalist mode of production rather than as a conjunctural phenomenon. I look forward to Zamora and Jäger's forthcoming book on the intellectual history of basic income and hope that they have anticipated some of these critiques in their work.

Notes

- 1. Daniel Zamora and Anton Jäger, "Historicizing Basic Income: Response to David Zeglen," *Lateral* 8, no. 1 (2019), https://doi.org/10.25158/L8.1.8.
- 2. See Jan Rehmann's *Theories of Ideology: The Powers of Alienation and Subjection* (Chicago: Haymarket, 2013) for a full account of how common sense is the nexus of contradictory tendencies from above and below.
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Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019) Responses Universal Basic Income

UBI as a Tool for Solidarity: A Response to Richard Todd Stafford

Caroline West

ABSTRACT I am examining UBI in order to imagine a more egalitarian democracy under capitalism through the redistribution of national wealth that all labor, paid and unpaid, create. I maintain that the redistribution of capital through a UBI cannot be completely dismissed; however, the key would be to remain dedicated to emboldening individual economic agency through bottom-up initiatives while battling for infrastructural changes in a governmental, top-down fashion.

In a thoughtfully developed response, Richard Todd Stafford offers a critique of my examination of the potential effects of an implementation of a universal basic income to combat the economic struggles of the population living in Central Appalachia. Stafford focuses his analysis on the necessity of "solidarity" for any potential implementation of a national UBI. Solidarity takes both a macro, national form and a micro, regional form, which in my case study was centered on Central Appalachia. Stafford questions whether my formulation of a UBI was a "speculative narrative," where the aspirational effects could be grounded in other political projects, or if it is "a practical political project" in and of itself.

As a practical political project, Stafford highlights Matt Bruenig's American Solidarity Fund, a national social wealth fund modeled on the Alaska Permanent Fund, which Bruenig proposes would eliminate wealth inequality. Stafford compellingly argues that through this type of redistribution, class struggles would dramatically shift focus from the private sector to the state. Therefore, such a fundamental shift in economic relations under a UBI "would entail a radical political mobilization and/or presuppose a significant social transformation has already occurred. I realize that a political revolution necessary to implement a UBI would be profound not only in economic but also ideological terms. Stafford justly treats my analysis as a speculative narrative and, in doing so, elicits a legitimate question: if there were a political will to create a UBI, should that power be harnessed to achieve this goal, or would it temper any revolutionary potential to fundamentally upend structural social and economic inequalities?

I do concur that if a UBI began disbursement tomorrow, it would not elicit a profound social transformation because existing structural deficiencies would still be in place. This assertion in no way implies that a UBI would not be individually impactful. Current Democratic Presidential candidate Andrew Yang's primary campaign platform is the Freedom Dividend, a \$1,000 per month UBI dispensed to every American citizen over the age of eighteen. As a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, Yang warns of encroaching automation in a spectrum of employment sectors that threaten to undermine the ability for Americans to find work and earn wages. An additional \$1,000 per month to every individual subsisting on minimum wage employment, unemployment, or

underemployment would absolutely provide some economic relief. A monthly injection of \$1,000 could cover the medical insurance deductible for two people or rent for a studio apartment in a small- to mid-sized city. This monthly infusion of cash would alleviate real economic hardships for paying the costs of some essential needs. However, in this scenario, a UBI would simply help individuals maintain survival within the economic status quo and would do little to challenge the exorbitant costs of health care, housing, childcare, and the like. Therefore, in the immediate-term and in isolation, a UBI would only make the unaffordability of these basic rights slightly more accessible. That is, until inflation and the rising costs of living expenses erode and diminish any benefits of a standalone UBI initiative.

Rather than a mechanism to undermine the capitalist mode of production, Yang posits that a UBI is essential for the continuation of a functioning economic system, which he argues would be actualized as "human-centered capitalism." Essentially, Yang hopes to "save" capitalism from itself through a UBI. This narrative on the potential effects of a UBI is firmly entrenched in what Stafford rightly warns could lead to an increase in the tight tethering of commodity and monetary exchange with "what it means to be a social subject." The skepticism Stafford expresses on over-romanticizing this kind of soft capitalism and a "small-is-beautiful localism" of the market is well-placed since we know that small businesses do not compete with, much less disrupt, the destructive effects of massive resource extractions by multinational corporations. However, I maintain that the redistribution of capital through a UBI cannot be completely dismissed. The key would be to remain dedicated to emboldening individual economic agency through bottom-up initiatives while battling for infrastructural changes in a governmental, top-down fashion.

The Green New Deal policy resolution introduced in Congress by Senator Ed Markey and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez provides a blueprint for restructuring government's role and responsibilities to its population. It not only imagines policy that puts renewal energy expansion and environmental protections for air, water, and land at the forefront, but it also tackles labor and wage exploitation in its calls for raising the federal minimum wage and protecting the collective right of workers to form unions and organize. The resolution includes a provision for ensuring access to health care to all citizens, which could be achievable with a single-payer system alongside programs to bring that care to non-urban areas. The resolution articulates a bottom-up commitment by way of "transparent and inclusive consultation, collaboration, and partnership with frontline and vulnerable communities, labor unions, worker cooperatives, civil society groups, academia, and businesses. By highlighting worker cooperatives, perhaps the policy marks a commitment to develop and support these types of the socialized businesses that are not solely grounded in market relations.

Stafford acutely brings forth the argument that continuing to treat Appalachia as distinct and unique "could under some conditions also encourage reactionary cultural insularity or even foster social exclusion." 10 I agree and I have addressed the problematic positioning of Appalachians as an anomaly of American poverty in my dissertation work, specifically in its photographic representation. 11 My critique of the work of photographer Shelby Lee Adams of Appalachians in Eastern Kentucky feels relevant in this context. Adams has dedicated forty-plus years to photographing families who mainly reside in the remote mountain hollers in Eastern Kentucky. 12 He believes he is trying to right the visual and rhetorical wrongs made by the government and media who historically have not portrayed Appalachians "honestly." 13 In his work, Adams comments on the ways that Appalachia has been transformed in the past few decades:

My work has strictly followed word of mouth and personal introductions for all these years. However, it is becoming more difficult to find the authentic salt-of-the-earth people, who are now being overrun by a more sugar-coated society. The families who occupied this land for more than a couple hundred years are now interspersed with a new breed of Appalachian and land developers driving Hummers and Escalades, owning oddly shaped swimming pools and mansions built into the mountaintops after the coal is removed and the mountains reclaimed It is a more varied and diluted world now. Salt preserves wholesomeness and prevents decay, but the people from the earlier, harderformed age who bear that special look are now in decline. 14

The dichotomy Adams presents between the "salt-of-the-earth people" of yesteryear as wholesome and simple and the newly arrived "sugar-coated society" that live in large houses and drive expensive cars implies that the authenticity of Appalachians is defined through their hardship and poverty. Adams is not naming gentrifying forces and its negative effects on land and wealth distribution; instead, he is dismayed that those with wealth are moving to the region. Adams wants to strictly control the appropriate idea of what betterment should be in his Appalachian narrative. He universalizes an ahistorical agrarian myth by conveniently leaving out the very specific history of the conditions of land and labor in the mineral rich mountains of Appalachia that he took as his subject. In Adams visual narrative, he argues for the maintenance of the status quo that not only separates Appalachian poverty from the rest of the country but also preserves existing conditions of structural inequalities.

Despite the counterrevolutionary narrative that Adams espouses, the pride that Appalachians feel for their culture and geography is not atypical from that of other regions in the United States. What often grounds these sources of pride can be framed through the specific histories of working-class labor practices across the country. This is seen in the pride of mining, farming, and steel manufacturing inside and outside Appalachia, manufacturing labor throughout the Midwest, and agricultural labor in the Great Plains and California's Central Valley. Further, I would argue that the urban and suburban white-collar labor practices could align in this larger narrative on culture of work and space. I believe there can be solidarity between the specific history of land and labor in Appalachia alongside that of other geographic and political economic regions in the United States. It is possible that a UBI could provide one thread to link rather than divide people across the different political economic perspectives. I appreciate Stafford's generous analysis and critique of the tensions between social life and market forces inherent in any UBI initiative strapped to the capitalist mode of production. I hope there continues to be robust debate on both the theoretical underpinnings of a UBI and its potential as an actualized political project.

Notes

- 1. Richard Todd Stafford, "Response to Caroline West's 'From Company Town to Post-Industrial: Inquiry on the Redistribution of Space and Capital with a Universal Basic Income," *Lateral* 8, no. 1 (Spring 2019), https://doi.org/10.25158/L8.1.11.
- 2. Matt Bruenig, "Social Wealth Fund for America," *People's Policy Project*, https://peoplespolicyproject.org/projects/social-wealth-fund; Stafford, "Response," paragraph 10.
- 3. Stafford, "Response," paragraph 12. 2
- 4. Yang2020, "Policy: The Freedom Dividend," https://www.yang2020.com/policies/the-freedom-dividend/.

- 5. Yang2020, "Policy: Human-Centered Capitalism," https://www.yang2020.com/policies/human-capitalism/.
- 6. Stafford, "Response," paragraph 19.
- 7. Stafford, "Response," footnote 32.
- 8. "Recognizing the Duty of the Federal Government to Create a Green New Deal," H.R. 109, 116th Cong. (2019), https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-resolution/109/text.
- 9. "Recognizing the Duty of the Federal Government." **2**
- 10. Stafford, "Response," paragraph 16. 🖸
- 11. Caroline West, "Picturing Capital: Mass Media and the Art of Visualizing Poverty" (PhD diss., George Mason University, 2019).
- 12. Adams has published five photographic books on his Appalachian subjects. His Appalachian work is included in over sixty permanent collections including such prestigious American art institutions as the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Art Institute of Chicago, Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Museum of Modern Art. He is also represented by numerous art galleries in major US cities including Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles. Adams maintains a website that can be found at https://shelby-lee-adams.blogspot.com.
- 13. *The True Meaning of Pictures: Shelby Lee Adams' Appalachia*, directed by Jennifer Baichwal (New York: Docurama, 2003), DVD.
- 14. Shelby Lee Adams, Salt & Truth (Richmond, VA: Candela Books, 2011), 25.

å Bio

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Steven Gotzler, "Years in Cultural Studies: 1956—The British New Left and the 'Big Bang' Theory of Cultural Studies," *Lateral 8.2* (2019).

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1956—The British New Left and the "Big Bang" Theory of Cultural Studies

Steven Gotzler

ABSTRACT In intellectual histories of cultural studies, the year 1956 usually figures as a "big bang" moment. Centered on the geopolitical flashpoints of the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez Crisis, it was the year that catalyzed the British new left, and thus, the story goes, provided a new front of political critique that would serve as the jumping-off point for the nascent formation of cultural studies in Britain. This article presents a brief overview of this conventional pre-history of cultural studies in Britain. It then departs from this familiar story to outline several other notable "big bang" moments happening elsewhere in 1956 with resonance across literature, global labor history, the visual arts, and the women's movement. These other moments each arguably have considerable bearing on the articulation of cultural studies in Britain, and their examples provide a more globally diverse and textured frame for re-situating the emergence of cultural studies at midcentury beyond the narrow focus on new left politics.

In intellectual histories of cultural studies, the year 1956 usually figures as a "big bang" moment. It was the year that catalyzed the British New Left and thus, the story goes, provided a new front of political critique that served as the jumping off point for the nascent formation of cultural studies in Britain. I use the conceit of the "big bang" advisedly, to signal the way that these commonplace histories revolve around 1956 as a moment of absolute genesis. In the process, they tend to construe the historical emergence of the New Left, as a self-identified and self-contained movement, as something which occurred all-at-once, in direct response to the eruption of two specific crises in the fateful year of 1956. In these accounts of the "big bang" of 1956, the two crises are located within a pair of geopolitical flashpoints from the closing months of that year in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The "New Left" drift in British politics and letters that followed provided a new animus for cultural criticism and forged fresh tracks in English Marxism as an attempt to first imagine, then build, a renewed independent socialism. Ultimately, the theoretical synthesis of these two intellectual currents provided the ferment out of which British cultural studies eventually emerged as a distinct intellectual formation shaped largely in response to the twin crises of Suez and Hungary.

This article presents a brief overview of this conventional pre-history of cultural studies in Britain. It then departs from this familiar intellectual story to outline several other important "big bang" moments happening elsewhere in 1956 across literature, global labor history, the visual arts, and the women's movement. In their own ways, each of these moments would have considerable bearing on the concerns articulated by cultural studies in Britain, and globally, as they developed over the second half of the twentieth century. Their examples provide a more differently textured and globally diverse frame for situating the emergence of cultural studies at mid-century beyond a narrow focus on the New Left. As such, I want to suggest that looking to some of these pivotal moments elsewhere in 1956 might provide novel inspiration for the ways that we orient our understanding of this lightning-rod year in the history of cultural studies.

Two Crises, Two Journals

1956, it has been said, was "the year that the 'first' New Left was born." But 1956, according to Stuart Hall, more than just a watershed year, represented a decisive conjuncture in postwar British social life. First, 1956 witnessed the violent repression of the Hungarian revolution by the Soviet Army from November 4 to November 11. The Hungarian Uprising sought to oust the one-party Soviet-backed state of the People's Republic of Hungary and had begun as a student protest over the preceding summer months. The CPGB's public backing of Soviet actions came on the heels of the unsettling revelations in Khrushchev's "Secret Speech," which denounced the Stalinist purges of the previous regime. These developments combined to accelerate a credibility crisis within official British Communist circles. Disaffection with the atmosphere of hardline orthodoxy and recriminations associated with the CPGB had already been rife since the onset of the Cold War in the early fifties, and the incident in Hungary triggered a mass exodus of the Party's ranks. Second was the invasion and occupation by British led forces of the Suez Canal zone from October 26 to November 7. The tripartite aggression, spearheaded by Israel and then joined by Britain and France, was orchestrated as an effort to reassert economic control over the canal zone after Egypt's post-revolutionary leadership, under President Gamal Abdel Nasser, had seized and nationalized the canal in July. The British military response was widely condemned and failed to secure backing from the Eisenhower administration in the United States who felt it was politically irresponsible and might further destabilize the region in the favor of the Soviet Union. In Britain, the incident became a source of international embarrassment and came to symbolize a misguided adventurism indicative of accelerating colonial disintegration and a precipitous decline of British status within the new world order.

Retrospectively, commentators have characterized these events as exposing the deep-seated problems within both of the competing Cold War systems: Stalinist repression in the East and imperialist aggression in the West. Of course, a fuller accounting of the political histories of both regions, and the shifting balance of social forces that precipitated these "crises" would require a much more rigorous and in-depth accounting than would be appropriate to the purpose of this article. Suffice it to say that these two crises have historically been understood as opening the way within the shifting landscape of left politics in Britain during the fifties for new currents in socialist thought, by carving out a space of independent left critique that could be both anti-Stalinist and anti-imperialist.

The New Left that grew out of this conjuncture drew together several overlapping social, economic, and cultural cleavages that had been widening in Britain's postwar consensus. These cracks exposed the central contradictions animating political discourse at the time. The usual diagnosis runs as follows: traditional left organizations like the Labour Party and the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) found themselves unable to articulate the shifting foci of political disaffection among a working-class base that had been largely shorn of the material conditions of deprivation and hard poverty, which had functioned as old standbys for the Left's political rhetoric. By the mid-fifties however, many people in Britain were enjoying a new affluence—especially in cheap consumer goods and mass entertainments—secured by a relatively robust welfare state and economic conditions of increased professional mobility and nearly full employment.

In these circumstances, the Left found itself in search of a new rhetoric of political vision. Revisionist figures like Anthony Crosland argued that the new affluence ought to be embraced as a social good, suggesting that any rise in general prosperity was compatible with the socialist project. Crosland's influential book *The Future of Socialism* (1956) shifted the conversation away from public ownership and onto the public provision of

services, arguing that postwar gains in patterns of personal consumption for working-class people might inevitably lead to similar gains in overall social equality. Somewhat paradoxically, years later Crosland cited North American sociologist Kenneth Galbraith's notable *The Affluent Society* (1958) in support of his theory. Meanwhile for most commentators in Britain, Galbraith's skeptical diagnosis was taken as a damning indictment of the economic realities underwriting the postwar social consensus by exposing the manner in which the "private opulence" of affluence concealed the persistence of "public squalor" by conflating social prosperity with commodity consumption. 4

In the context of these debates, by 1956 a series of ideological fault lines emerged within left intellectual circles. They seemed to pose a choice between an older more rigid Labourism whose economic appeals seemed antiquated within the context of postwar affluence on the one hand, and a new currency in accommodationist, even celebratory, Crosland style revisionism on the other. In addition to the traditional left's slide towards irrelevance in domestic affairs, a host of new existential threats had emerged abroad: the specter of bureaucratic authoritarianism figured both by the supposed tyranny of the centralized state in Soviet Russia as well as the numbing conformity of American style corporate managerialism, outbreaks of destructive imperialist violence in East Asia and other parts of the "Third World," and an ever-present threat of nuclear annihilation delicately balanced on the rivalry of two foreign superpowers. In an effort to respond to these new global realities in a way that moved beyond the false choice between Labourism and Revisionism, new strains of Left thought were already beginning to take shape by the time the twin crises of Suez and Hungary shocked them into action.

However, if the twin crises of 1956 served as the moment of decisive conjunctural convulsion—elucidating a new set of cultural and political fault lines that had been developing in the decade since the close of the Second World War—the New Left only materialized as an identifiable formation between 1957 and 1959. Over the course of these years, political energies were mobilized in response to the twin crises of Suez and Hungary and the impetus to renew the socialist project in the face of postwar political realities that they inspired. When the crises broke out in the fall of 1956, what inchoate New Left there was revolved around two niche journals, one recently established and one soon-to-be: *The Reasoner* and *Universities and Left Review (ULR)*. Each of these publications, and the coterie of students and academics involved with them, would come to form the intellectual nucleus of what is typically described as the "first" British New Left.

The group behind *The Reasoner* was drawn mostly from the ranks of academic history. An outgrowth of the activities of the Communist Party Historians Group which had been formed in 1946, *The Reasoner* first appeared in the summer of 1956. The journal was conceived as a space to think through and critique some of the issues facing the CPGB from within, by affiliated and "loyal" members without attracting the taint of anticommunism. In its original incarnation it ran for three issues and featured contributions from prominent British communists and Marxist historians such as Doris Lessing, Christopher Hill, John Saville, Rodney Hilton, Eric Hobsbawm, and E.P. Thompson. After the Soviet aggression in Hungary, many of the journal's editors and contributors broke formally with the party. Less than a year later, in the summer of 1957, the journal had reconstituted as *The New Reasoner: A Journal of Socialist Humanism* which continued publishing articles in line with the strain of dissident communism *The Reasoner* had pioneered, while also beginning to deal in occasional pieces of cultural criticism and short fiction. ⁵

In character, the Reasoner group were most closely associated with workers movements in the north of England, especially around Yorkshire where Thompson had worked for several years as an extramural tutor in adult education programs. Their outlook was informed by a concerted effort to recover and disclose the values of an authentic tradition of English radicalism as a means of revitalizing the socialist movement in Britain for the twentieth century, for instance, Dorothy Thompson's important work on the history of Chartism or her husband E.P. Thompson's biography of William Morris, the nineteenthcentury renaissance man and committed socialist who championed the Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain. In his reviews for early issues of *The New Reasoner* Thompson also pointed to the native roots of popular protest and collective action in England emblematized by incidents such as the 1819 Peterloo Massacre. This intellectual project was heavily shaped by the context of the Historian's Group and the vociferous debates carried on by figures like Hill about the nature of class-antagonisms during the English Civil War, or the transition from feudalism to capitalism during the late middle-ages. In this vein, the Reasoner group's major contribution to the New Left has usually been understood as the formulation and elaboration of a distinctive socialist humanism. This particularly English flavor of Marxist humanism emerged as a repudiation of Stalinist and centralist imperatives to efface the individual, and insisted that revolutionary change could only be achieved as a genuine and lasting success by a movement that took seriously the human experience of social being and consciousness—posing their intersection as the only site upon which an effective class-based solidarity might be built.

The group that coalesced around *Universities and Left Review* were quite different in both their character and outlook. However, they too shared a similar desire to reimagine socialist politics for Britain in the twentieth century, and they were sympathetic to the humanist imperative for a theory of politics that might address "real" and "living" people. While these efforts at *The New Reasoner* tended to take their inspiration from the radical cultural traditions embedded within English working-class history, those at ULR looked to the radical gestures figured by the growth the new cinema and popular culture. In the main, the ULR group were drawn from the cosmopolitan Oxbridge set, and were culturally more attuned to the bustling London scene than the northern industrial cities. They also tended to comprise a much younger demographic as many of them were still students or postgraduates. As Hall later noted, they also represented a more culturally diverse perspective. Stuart Hall was Jamaican and had come to Oxford from Kingston in 1951, there was also a French-Canadian Charles Taylor, the American Norman Birnbaum, and Gabriel Pearson and Raphael Samuel who were both of London Jewish background. Many of them had already come to an independent socialist position as a result of their time spent in the seminars of Oxford luminary G. D. H. Cole imbibing his critiques of statist socialist models, and being schooled in what Hall describes in his reminiscence as the "cooperative and 'workers' control' traditions of Guild Socialism." As a result of this student positioning, the ULR wing of the New Left formation also developed close ties to the youth movement and other avenues of perceived middle-class radicalism like the CND.

The first issue of *ULR* did not appear until the spring of 1957 following the tumultuous events of the previous autumn in 1956. Its inaugural issue famously called on readers to "take socialism at full stretch" by pushing to develop a critique of postwar society, and a theory of the socialist future, that could speak to and encompass the sweep of human activities and production, in culture and the media no less than in politics and the economy.⁸ For many, this meant carving out a third position between Stalinism in the Eastern bloc on the one hand, and the Western revisionist style social democracy that was beginning to hold sway in the Labour party on the other. In character, the pages of *ULR* evinced a more modish radicalism than the Marxist historians behind *The*

Reasoner. For instance, the journal's first three issues featured pieces on commitment in the arts, the political potentiality of documentaries and an essay on "Free Cinema" by new wave filmmaker Lindsay Anderson, several articles tracking current developments on the Left in France and Italy, as well as coverage of rising nationalism in colonial Africa and the Middle East. As Hall often fondly pointed out, ULR self-consciously modeled themselves on the French nouvelle gauche movement. In addition to the journal, the ULR group created and maintained new intellectual spaces with the Partisan Coffeehouse and ULR Club, both located in London, where they hoped that sociality and exchange might flourish across various left traditions and constituencies.

The *ULR* group's contribution to the New Left has usually been cast in terms of its theoretical eclecticism. In truth, its most lasting impression was to commit to the *culturalist* approach to political theory that was inherent in much of the socialist humanist work being circulated *The Reasoner*, and apply it in rough and ready analyses of the new social formations and contemporary political realities unfolding in the culture before their very eyes. This type of intervention is perhaps best crystallized in Hall's well known essay "A Sense of Classlessness," where he proposed, citing Raymond Williams, a cultural frame for investigating the new coordinates of class politics in an affluent society, describing the issue as "a matter of a whole way of life, of an attitude towards things and people, within which new possessions—even a new car, a new house or a TV set—find meaning through use." 11 Cultural considerations such as these surfaced as a consistent editorial concern in a range of pieces exploring the specifically cultural stakes of contemporary political questions and scrutinizing the political role of key cultural institutions like schools and, of course, the university. 12

From 1957 to 1960 there was widespread collaboration and partnership across the two journals, and in 1960, by all accounts for reasons having as much to do with the pooling of resources towards mutual survival as anything else, they merged to form *New Left Review (NLR)* with Stuart Hall presiding as editor. Over the next two years, *NLR* continued to publish critical essays on a diverse set of issues including Labour politics, social policy issues, race relations, and popular culture. By 1962 however, with a mounting exhaustion of financial and human resources, and amid rising tensions between the publication's board and editorial staff, Hall stepped down as editor. Shortly thereafter, Perry Anderson brokered a deal to rescue the journal from its dire financial straits and assumed full organizational control. Within the span of six short years the fires of '56 that had sparked the first New Left had waned and begun to go out.

The British New Left and Cultural Studies

Narratives of the birth of the "first" New Left in Britain tend to adhere to this basic outline. Given the chronological sequence of events it is unsurprising then that 1956 figures as a "big bang" moment of singular importance. As it pertains to the interwoven intellectual histories of the New Left and cultural studies in Britain, the effect has been to overlay this 1956 trajectory more or less directly onto the origin story of cultural studies itself. This frames cultural studies as a sort of aspect or consequence of the New Left. Thus, the New Left is taken to have established many of cultural studies'—at least as it appeared at Birmingham—central political commitments and theoretical concerns. Put another way, the history of the big bang for the British New Left in 1956 comes to be accepted as a kind of prehistoric narrative backdrop for the emergence of cultural studies in postwar Britain—*Cultural Studies 1956: The Prequel.* 13

In the scholarly record, Dennis Dworkin's seminal *Cultural Marxism in Postwar Britain: History, the New Left and the Origins of Cultural Studies*, perhaps more than any other single account, has cemented the historical common sense that identifies the genesis of

both the New Left and cultural studies in the "big bang" of 1956. While the year itself does not structure his analysis directly—his study covers a much wider sweep of time stretching up into the late seventies—in his coverage of the immediate postwar period events are laid out in terms of an explicit pre- and post-1956 frame that allows him to make sense of the intellectual ferment of the fifties. Likewise, other important New Left historiographies such as Lin Chun's *The British New Left* (Edinburgh UP, 1993) and Michael Kenny's *The First New Left: British Intellectuals After Stalin* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1995) hold to the same general scheme. Chun's account dissects the new left in terms of three main tendencies—dissident communism, independent socialism, and theoretical Marxism—tracing the roots of all three to the twin crises of Hungary and Suez in 1956 as *the year that made* the New Left. More recently, Madeleine Davis has authored several articles reevaluating the legacy of the British New Left where 1956 is cited as a pivotal starting point in investigations of the movement's engagements with Marxism, its connections to working-class communities and the work of E. P. Thompson.

In addition to the scholarly tendency to foreground 1956 as year zero, this narrative has been reproduced time and again through the firsthand testimony of key actors involved with the New Left movement, as is evidenced by the remarks on 1956 from Hall quoted above. 1956 functions as a similar hinge-point in a pair of retrospective assessments from Perry Anderson and Raymond Williams published in the mid-sixties after Labour finally reattained governmental power with the election of Harold Wilson in 1964. It would be foolish to deny the real, and often intimate, linkages obtaining between the histories of cultural studies and the New Left in Britain. Still, even if there are several very well-founded and clear reasons to narrate the emergence of the New Left during the "big bang" of Suez and Hungary in 1956, this does not self-apparently explain why we ought to locate our historical narratives of cultural studies within the same moment of genesis.

Nonetheless, there are at least three important reasons for the habit of rooting our earliest histories of British cultural studies in the birth of the New Left during 1956.

Firstly, the theoretical contributions that grew out of the debates between Marxism and culturalism across the pages of The New Reasoner, ULR, and NLR did in fact work through what would become the major theoretical synthesis characteristic of work at the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) during its most productive phase from 1968 to 1979. This consisted, in the first place, of a new definition of politics, or of the political as such. This new definition incorporated a sense of cultural processes, as ritual practice and communal relations, but also as commercial production and commodity consumption, as a no less central dimension of analysis than the economy, the state, or the law. This new cultural focus garnered a thorough rethinking of the classical base-superstructure model of Marxist cultural theory, resulting in theoretical efforts to construct what Chun describes as a "culturalist totality" that might re-integrate, under the rubric of socialist critique, the new configurations of power and identity in postwar society. 19 This reintegration was accomplished, in large part, with the help of newly available English translations of Gramsci's critiques of "vulgar economism," which, despite their rootedness in the context of early twentieth century Italy, provided concepts like "hegemony," "historical bloc," and "national-popular" that proved extremely useful for culturalist analyses of postwar Welfare State Britain. As Rainer Winter has pointed out, this synthesis and its institutionalization under the rubric of cultural studies performed an essential function for the New Left, especially in its second and third iterations during and after 1968, by providing the presence of a strong and radicalized sociology—a resource that had been lacking in Britain as compared with France or the United States, who by the late fifties boasted the likes of Henri Lefebvre, and C. Wright Mills respectively. 20

Secondly, the New Left has largely come to be understood historically as an essentially *intellectual* movement more so even than it has been as a *political* one. Several factors contribute to this view. To begin with, the New Left as an "organization" was only ever concretized in the journals discussed above, and in nebulous and diffusely affiliated left-inclusive social spaces like the network of New Left Clubs. As a result, the most lasting record of their activities consists primarily of intellectual writings. Additionally, many involved with the New Left have spoken of a perceived lack of connection to working-class communities and the workers' movement. Anderson and, in slightly more guarded terms, Williams both echo this critique in their mid-sixties retrospectives.²¹

Thirdly, the exhaustion of the movement's initial wave of activity by 1964 meant that key figures from this "first" New Left, most notably Hall, transitioned away from being full-time activist organizers and part-time theorists, to being full-time academics and part-time politicos. Indeed, many of the documents conventionally earmarked as the "founding texts" of British cultural studies were published during this first New Left cycle of activity from 1956 to 1964, including Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1957), Williams's *Culture & Society* (1958) and "Culture Is Ordinary" (1958), Hall's "A Sense of Classlessness" (1958), and Thompson's *The Making of the English Working-Class* (1963). The neatness of this historical correspondence has been taken as suggestive of a continuity of intellectual energies between the first British New Left and early British cultural studies. While this seems only reasonable—especially in the case of figures like Hall, Williams, and Thompson who were centrally active within New Left publishing and organizing—there are other notable points of departure that can be traced between the "first" New Left and early British cultural studies.

The clearest exception is Richard Hoggart. The author of *The Uses of Literacy* and the CCCS's founding director, Hoggart had only tangential relations to the New Left. His work was quite far, in focus and temperament, from both the avant-garde radicalism associated with the *ULR* set and the dissident communism of the *Reasoner* group. Hoggart's own writings blended a social documentary impulse in the style of Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier* with the incisive approach to textual criticism pioneered by the Leavis group and *Scrutiny* during the 1930s and 1940s. In fact, Thompson, and to a lesser degree Williams, were both critical of Hoggart's book when it appeared in 1957. They especially objected to his omission of the long traditions of working-class protest and activism in his richly textured overview of English working-class culture. This left-Leavisite bent to Hoggart's perspective is well-documented as an important literary-critical tributary in the headwaters of British cultural studies. Yet despite Hoggart's centrality to the institutionalization of cultural studies and its initial program of self-definition and study, his misfit status amongst this otherwise largely New Left crowd has not served to decenter the big bang narrative of 1956.

If one lumps Hoggart in with his more radical New Left contemporaries, there appears to be a direct straight line from the "awakening" in 1956 through the simultaneous birth of the New Left and cultural studies in the keystone works listed above published from 1957 to 1964. This through line is complicated, however, when considering the composition history of these works more closely. As Alan O'Connor has noted, many of these key texts had been either mostly or entirely drafted prior to 1956:

Williams wrote *Culture* and *Society* in relative isolation from 1952 to 1956. Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* was written from 1952 to 1955, its publication delayed because of fears of legal action over its criticism of popular writers. E. P. Thompson's monumental *William Morris* was published in 1955, and there is evidence that the chapter on the Socialist League, entitled "Making Socialists," was widely read by those who formed the New Left.²²

Additionally, as O'Connor expands, the incidents in Hungary and Egypt were only the latest in a string of events marking an already quite turbulent decade of global left politics including "the suppression of workers in East Germany in 1953 and ongoing anti-colonial struggles in many parts of Africa" and the need to confront the ideological handcuffs of Cold War binarism had surfaced well before the violence in Budapest. 23

Finally, one should not underestimate the extent to which Stuart Hall's colocation within the emergent stages of each of these formations—the first British New Left, and cultural studies at Birmingham—has had a determinative effect on the taken for granted shorthand of their shared origin within the same historical wellspring of 1956. Hall himself certainly experienced them as intermingling developments borne out of the same conjunctural moment, as no doubt did many others in Britain. Still, when a single voice authors the definitive accounts of "Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies" and "The Life and Times of the First New Left," such wholesale mis/identification is perhaps inevitable. In a strange twist, Hall's account of the "Life and Times of the First New Left" ends by offering a contrasting view to the traditional characterization of the New Left as a mere intellectual milieu and instead emphasizes its importance as a short-lived but nonetheless real living political *movement* with strong and active ties to struggles amongst working-class and immigrant communities during the late fifties. 24 Taken at face value, this assessment stands at odds with the logic by which Hall's preeminent status as a protagonist of both the British New Left and cultural studies usually serves to affirm at one and the same time a) the predominantly intellectual composition of the former, and b) the politically committed practices of the latter. As Andrew Milner has argued, among the early influences shaping cultural studies as an academic field the conception of it as fundamentally an "engaged" scholarly mode of "political intervention" can largely be attributed to Hall's influence. 25 It is significant to note, also, that both Anderson and Williams' retrospectives speak of the "first" New Left in the past tense, as a decidedly historical formation, whose energies had by 1964 largely fizzled out. Of course, the student of cultural studies will recognize 1964 as the year in which Richard Hoggart founded the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham. The first British New Left, it would seem then, ends precisely where British cultural studies formally begins.

If perhaps the seductive simplicity of this historical timeline largely underwrites the twin crises narratives of a joint "big bang" in 1956, it does not adequately capture the range of interest, practice, and perspective animating the sweep of intellectual production and research of cultural studies in its earliest period at Birmingham under Hoggart's direction from 1964 to 1968. Less still, does it encompass the years leading up to the Center's founding (1956–1963) that are usually dominated by narratives of the New Left.

Elsewhere in 1956

While the historical connections between the New Left and cultural studies in Britain are no doubt important and are even in certain ways, as in Hall's case, decisive, the tendency to foreground the twin crises of Suez and Hungary as *the* key events of 1956 limits our historical understanding of the varied and diverse nature of the cultural, intellectual, and political currents of experimentation, inquiry, and concern that collided under the rubric of cultural studies as it developed over the course of subsequent decades.

In the remainder of this essay, I will suggest several other decisive "big-bang" moments from elsewhere in 1956. In doing so, I hope to signal new ways that we might approach the conjuncture that 1956 represents in order to reach beyond the narrow frame allowed by repeated retellings of the rise of the British New Left. These New Left narratives, while capturing the importance of certain ideological and intellectual debates during the late

fifties, also tend to frame the narrative in ways that privilege a certain stratum of highly educated, politically committed, British, and mostly male, intellectual voices. The alternative "big bangs" that I will suggest are drawn from across the theater, literature, the visual arts, and the women's movement, and each offer a way of reconceptualizing 1956 as a year in cultural studies. As such, the historical vignettes that follow should be taken as more suggestive than comprehensive, as invitations to imagine how centering our memory of 1956 in different ways might illuminate a different way of telling the prehistory of cultural studies. In each case, I will offer a brief summary of the key event to be discussed and examine its importance for the historical development of the concerns of cultural studies. I will then consider how refocusing 1956 around each of these moments might enable us to tell the story of cultural studies in new ways. Ways that hopefully are themselves more responsive to both the concerns of the present and the complexities of the past.

John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* Premieres at the Royal Court Theatre, London

On May 8, 1956, Jon Osborne's three-act one-room play Look Back in Anger premiered to its first audience. As a singular moment in the conjuncture of 1956, it is important for providing a focal point for naming the new sensibility of what became known as the "Angry Young Men." Directed by Tony Richardson who would go on to become a prominent filmmaker in the "kitchen-sink realism" school of the British new wave, Osborne's play upturned the conventions of the Victorian drawing room production, replacing lighthearted hijinks with prolonged rants of social invective, and coarsely realist bouts of domestic bickering. While widely acknowledged as ground-breaking in its bald depiction of postwar class disaffection, the play was also considered controversial and offensive to conservative artistic tastes, famously prompting one notable critic to walk out on the performance. The term "Angry Young Men" (AYM) is most readily associated with a cycle of fiction writing during the mid to late fifties including novels like John Wain's Hurry on Down (1953) and Kingsley Amis's Lucky Jim (1954), or John Braine's Room at the Top (1957), and Alan Sillitoe's Saturday Night and Sunday Morning (1958). The term has always been somewhat amorphous, but the "anger" of the movement's literature is usually understood as a response to class-based frustrations with the seemingly robust welfare state's inability to upend class distinctions or limit prewar patterns of social exclusion despite providing new standards of material comfort.

Within cultural studies there have been occasional efforts to inform our understanding of the subjective positionality of New Left and early cultural studies attitudes and dispositions with reference to the AYM. In these cases, cultural studies' relation to this culture of working-class masculine indignation has been diagnosed as an inborne weakness that sites key concepts like "the popular" and "resistance" squarely within the rebel yell of a white male English working-class. Paul Gilroy notably observed the ways in which a "thematics of identity" could be traced in a triangulating fashion between the foundational works of Williams, Hoggart, and Thompson so as to reveal the clear ways by which, "cultural development and cultural politics came to be configured as exclusively English national phenomena." ²⁶ Similarly, Paul Smith has argued that these early circumstances of cultural filiation ultimately marred cultural studies with "a set of genetic deficits" that surface most clearly in a vision of class conflict and identity that suffers from a misguided sense of paternalism, condescension, or both. ²⁷

In recent literary studies, there has been a push to rearticulate not just the coincidental resonances but the deep and substantive connections between AYM fiction and early cultural studies work, especially in the writing and teaching of Richard Hoggart. Work by

scholars such as Tracy Hargreaves, Ben Clarke, Jeremy Seabrook, Peter Kalliney, Nick Bentley, and Mary Eagleton has done much to draw out the crosscurrents of production and perspective between postwar literary criticism, the politics of class and gender in AYM novels, and the pioneering critical efforts that built New Left style culturalism. 28 Of particular note in this regard is Susan Brook's Literature and Cultural Criticism in the 1950s: The Feeling Male Body. 29 The political and economic coordinates of the postwar welfare state which were the proving ground for culturalist interventions in left politics also enabled, in a fairly straightforward way, the postures of virile and brutal masculinity on display in AYM narratives. The displacement of social disaffection with class-based exclusion onto anxieties about domesticity and sexual dominance in these texts relied upon the fact that opportunities for men to fulfill their role as economic providers were no longer seriously threatened. As Peter Kalliney has noted, "this particular configuration of masculinity" is premised upon the material security of "the single-family home and its attendant commodities—only made realistic for the majority of the working-class during the 1950s."³⁰ As such, Kalliney, Brook, and others have called attention to the ways that AYM novels dramatizing these subtle shifts in the sexual economy such as Sillitoe's Saturday Night and Sunday Morning serve as fictional corollaries to the preoccupation with bygone domestic spaces and gendered certitudes in the opening section of Hoggart's The Uses of Literacy.

Literary critical work of this kind might be extended to leverage our historical practices of self-narration in ways that draw attention to what Carol Stabile recognized in recent coinage as the "virilophile preference" at the heart of cultural studies historical projections of itself. 31 Refocusing the story of 1956 around key events like the premier of Osborne's play might call our attention to the cult of viriliphilism underwriting British intellectual and literary culture generally during the mid-twentieth century. This tendency sits at the beating heart of the AYM sensibility and the masculinist class politics that it endorses. The emergence of cultural studies then, might be understood as rooted not just in the political crises of Hungary and Suez, but also squarely within the perceived crisis of working-class masculinity evinced by AYM reactions to threatened forms of lower-class masculine validation in the sexual economy. More than mere coincidence, these connections between the intellectual aims of the New Left movement and new angry forays into working class drama and fiction have shaped the intellectual reproduction and transmission of cultural studies as a field in significant and lasting ways.

Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* is Published in London and New York by St. Martin's Press

1956 also witnessed the publication of Trinidadian émigré novelist Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*. This pathbreaking novel portrays the vicissitudes of cultural assimilation and integration in the lives of several Trinidadian and Jamaican migrants as they struggle against poverty and discrimination in employment, housing, and sociality across the mixed urban terrain of the imperial metropole. The postwar settlers depicted in the novel are intended to typify what is often referred to as the "*Windrush* generation" named after the ship *Empire Windrush*, which brought the first significant party of West Indian immigrants to England in 1948. Selvon's work attempted to capture something of the social texture of this journey for West Indian migrants, and the novel's formal aspect, as a set of interconnected but multi-perspectival vignettes within the same neighborhood, narrativizes the process through which a genuinely transnational "West Indian" identity and community was taking shape. Written in a vernacular Trinidadian dialect, the novel also stands as an important milestone in the development of Caribbean literature during the twentieth century, and was part of larger flourishing of fiction by Caribbean writers at mid-century including George Lamming, Edgar Mittelholzer, Sylvia Wynter, and Roger

Mais. Taken together these writers articulated a new social consciousness of the "West Indian" experience in postwar cities like London.

Citing Selvon's novel as a "big bang" moment might reframe the history of cultural studies in 1956 within the context of empire and global labor history. The arrival of the Windrush generation signaled a new pattern of postcolonial labor migration and diasporic settlement. The postwar situation was distinctive in that contrary to many of their ancestors, they came voluntarily, though commonly driven by economic necessity, and with a view to staying in Britain indefinitely as permanent settlers, rather than as colonial travelers who would eventually cycle back home. Upon arrival in England, many West Indians faced occupational downgrading, discriminatory hiring practices, and barriers to obtaining quality housing outside of a few city neighborhoods controlled by slumlords operating dilapidated properties. 32 This fraught experience of "integration" for West Indians during the postwar years reflected the harsh reality of racial attitudes in Britain at mid-century, and by the end of the decade, outbursts of racial violence against minority communities had become semi-regular occurrences. These tensions culminated in the Notting Hill Race Riots of 1958, which saw wide spread looting, property damage, and physical violence perpetrated against West Indian communities in parts of northwest London. Following the violence, race become a fundamental issue and recurrent flashpoint in British politics that grew steadily throughout the sixties and seventies as the new coordinates of "post-imperial" British identity took shape.

British cultural studies too, emerged out of this ferment, yet the Windrush generation and the racial tumult of the fifties often figures only tangentially in histories of cultural studies. Stuart Hall's own biography once again looms large. As a member of the Windrush generation himself, Hall experienced many aspects of the same culture of racism when he arrived as a Rhodes scholar at Oxford in 1951. However, despite his abiding interest in the literary experimentation of writers like Selvon, 33 Hall's own comfortable middle-class Jamaican upbringing and his relatively privileged cultural status amongst Oxbridge intellectual circles has meant that his own biography has sometimes functioned as an uneasy stand-in for the working-class migrant communities of West Indians laboring in menial, manual, and often night shift jobs as custodians or transport workers in England's urban centers. Still, the New Left and student activists—Hall among them—played an active role during and after the riots, setting up a New Left Club in Notting Hill and organizing for safety in the neighborhoods most effected. Outside of this New Left frame, when locating the emergence of cultural studies in Britain we might draw upon Clair Willis' sweeping work in Lovers & Strangers: An Immigrant History of Post-War Britain as readily as we do Hoggart's Uses of Literacy. 34

Viewing 1956 as the "big bang" of the West Indian novel might also help us to situate the engaged and interventionist intellectual work normally associated with cultural studies in relation to the already longstanding traditions of community advocacy and race activism among London's Afro-Caribbean diaspora prior to the birth of the New Left. Venerable bodies such as Harold Moody's League of Colored Peoples (LCP) date to 1931, and Britain was a vibrant hub for the highly active Pan-African movement all throughout the 1930s and 1940s, hosting the movement's most radical congress at Manchester in 1945. The work of notable feminist activists like the playwright and poet Una Marson, who created the *Caribbean Voices* radio program on the BBC, and the journalist and community organizer Claudia Jones, who founded *The West Indian Gazette* (Britain's first black press) and helped established the inaugural Notting Hill Carnival in the wake of the riots, were of central importance for establishing the cultural platforms and infrastructure that enabled novels like Selvon's to constitute a broad public audience.

Connections might be drawn too, to the long and rich intellectual history of black radicalism across the Atlantic world. Recent scholarship in the history of social movements like Marc Matera's *Black London: The Imperial Metropolis and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* tackles both these areas, chronicling the spaces of intellectual sociality and productivity among black internationalist and anti-colonial intellectuals in London in political activism, higher education, popular music, and film. Moreover, the writings of Pan-African communists such as George Padmore and C.L.R. James in their analyses of the economies of colonialist exploitation, the historical legacies of slavery, and contemporary culture, made signal and important contributions not just to the intellectual traditions of black radical thought, but of central importance to Western Marxism generally.

This Is Tomorrow Exhibit by the Independent Group (IG) Shows at the Whitechapel Art Gallery

From August 8 to September 9, 1956 a new movement in contemporary art theory and practice unveiled itself to the world. The exhibit, entitled *This Is Tomorrow*, showcased work from a collective known as The Independent Group (IG) composed of young visual artists, architects, and art critics including Lawrence Alloway, Reynar Banham, Alison and Peter Smithson, Richard Hamilton, and Eduardo Paolozzi. From 1952 to 1955 the IG functioned as what some commentators have described as the "unruly research-and-development arm" of the Institute for Contemporary Art (ICA), more a "multifarious study group" than a cohesive style. Holding meetings at the ICA in London during the early fifties, they engaged in discussions examining the unfolding complex of relations between media, materiality, and everyday life in postwar society. In addition to grappling with the impact of science and engineering on modern design, the IG were interested in excavating and exploring the libidinal economies of desire underwriting popular cultures, and members like Hamilton revived Dada collage techniques layering images from Hollywood, the world of automobile design, and advertisements for consumer goods and household appliances to stage, as Alloway would later put it, "the drama of possessions."

In contrast to contemporaneous examinations like Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy*, the IG took a more open and positive view towards popular culture and Americanization that made Hoggart's analysis appear stodgy and conservative by comparison. As Dick Hebdige noted, the success of pop art and its quickly appropriated commercial absorption can make it hard for us to recognize today just how hostile and radical its gesture was in 1956. The kind of irreverent "pop"-culturalism that the IG effected was in sharp contrast to not only the traditional values in the culture at large and the conventional sensibility within the institutionalized art world, but also to the emerging New Left culturalist discourse around the impasse of class consciousness and social antagonism in a postwar world stripped of want.

The exhibit itself was divided into installations presenting work from twelve different working groups produced separately and without coordinated direction. As such, the final exhibit installations displayed a wide range of work—even for the eclectic sensibility of the IG—dealing in various themes and across different media. Several of the exhibits, especially those from group two and group twelve evinced aspects of a new shared sensibility, one that drew on the innovations of earlier artists like Duchamp to explore the changing modes of sensory perception in the postwar world. For instance, group two's installation with contributions from Hamilton, John McHale, and John Voelcker contained a striking integration of image and space including a "sixteen-foot-high image of Robbie the Robot; Marilyn Monroe, her skirt flying, in a scene from *The Seven Year Itch*; the giant bottle of Guinness; the spongy floor that, when stepped on, emitted strawberry air

freshener; the optical illusion corridor . . . the jukebox; and the reproduction of Van Gogh's *Sunflowers*" that unsurprisingly drew much attention. 38 Meanwhile, group twelve's space featuring work from Geoffrey Holroyd and Lawrence Alloway took its inspiration from information theory, presenting "a didactic display on the process of connecting found images" alongside a tack board which displayed continuously changing sets of pages torn from magazines. 39

In many ways, the IG's work presages what would become perennial preoccupations for much of cultural studies. A view of the consuming subject as *actively* engaged in a dynamic relation with the forces of mass cultural production rather than as its merely passive victim resonates with the studies conducted on youth and subcultures at CCCS, and the IG's sense of the mass culture industries presenting an entirely new mode of cultural perception and spectatorship anticipates the as yet untranslated essays of Walter Benjamin. This is especially true of North America, where Alloway's work as a curator and critic in New York during the sixties helped grow the pop art scene in the United States, enjoining and stimulating new critical energies already at work in the writings of an upand-coming generation of popular culture critics like Susan Sontag, Leslie Fiedler, and Robert Warshow. Pop art offered these American voices a way out of the dour tedium of the mass culture debates dominating critical discussions of television, comic books, Hollywood cinema, and pulp fiction at the time by posing a critique of the interlocking structures of economy, desire, and technology that was at once playful and incisive.

When considering the story of cultural studies in 1956, one novel conclusion we might draw from the "big bang" of *This Is Tomorrow* is to see the IG as engaged, through their art practice, in a kind of proto-cultural study of commercial mass culture using the exhibit space and catalogue essay rather than the journal or the book as their forms of intellectual expression. As Daniel Horowitz has observed, the IG were steeped in postwar currents of social and communications theory, drawing critical inspiration from works such as Norbert Weiner's *Cybernetics* (1948), David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) and Marshall McLuhan's *The Mechanical Bride* (1951).⁴⁰ For instance, one of the installations at the *This Is Tomorrow* exhibit presented itself as "a diagram which on the left began with the 'source' of a symbol, moved to an 'encoder,' then to a 'signal' between one "field of experience" and another, and then on the right to a "decoder" and then finally to a "destination."⁴¹

Positioning the IG as intellectual forerunners of cultural studies might also help unseat entrenched narrative habits in their treatment by art historians. As Anne Massey has argued, art historians' habit of viewing the IG in terms of a "patrilineage of pop" serves to cement its place in art historical time, but undermines its significance as a far-reaching and multi-faceted "response to modernity" more generally. In response, her work proposes "to link [the IG] sideways, across the cultural continuum" taking "a transdisciplinary approach" that might "establish the work of the Independent Group within a much broader disciplinary context than that of art history." Taking this kind of horizontal approach might also realize the avowals of equivalency with regards to artists and intellectuals found in the pages of *ULR* as well, an aspect which the tendency to privilege the political writings and activism of the first New Left in prehistories of British cultural studies has obscured rather than highlighted. 43

The Historic Women's March in Pretoria, South Africa

On August 9, 1956 a historic march against apartheid descended upon the Union Buildings at South Africa's government center in Pretoria. As many as 20,000 women drawn from a broad-based coalition across racial and ethnic lines participated in the action. The march was mobilized in response to the extension of the discriminatory "pass

laws." These laws represented one of the first efforts to legally institutionalize and enforce the National Party's segregationist apartheid doctrine after its rise to power in 1948. First re-developed in 1952, the pass system required non-white citizens to carry "pass-books" denoting their racial status and tracking whatever economic and civil privileges they did or *did not* enjoy. The implementation of these laws effectively criminalized the non-white population, subjecting them to constant physical harassment and forcible transportation, barring them from certain employment and restricting free movement. When in 1955 the government announced plans to impose pass-book laws for all African women by 1956, fearing the sexual abuse at the hands of police this would license and the loss of crucial sources of casual employment that it would inevitably entail, women raised their voices across the country in vehement dissent.

The march on Pretoria was organized by the Women's League of the ANC and the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW). Founded in 1954, FEDSAW played a central role in the foundation of the anti-apartheid movement, taking a leading role in the Defiance Campaign, and contributing to the Congress of the People at Kliptown in 1955 that produced the historic Freedom Charter, grounding the core-principles of the antiapartheid movement for decades after. 45 The 1956 Women's March brought together activist energies from across the broad coalition of groups struggling against apartheid including indigenous groups, the Indian community, the trade union movement, and progressive democrats, to challenge not only racial inequality, but the specific weight of women's oppression under apartheid rule. Key leaders within the movement like Lillian Ngoyi also forged links with internationalist feminist organizations like the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) whose influence would help sustain global networks of solidarity between women's organizers across the second and third worlds throughout the Cold War, sponsoring several conferences and workshops in the late seventies and eighties that helped advance an anti-capitalist critique of women's oppression that recognized globalizing market forces and neo-colonialism as central structures of patriarchal power. 46

For cultural studies, framing 1956 in terms of events like the march in South Africa offer ways of countering the accepted narratives which displace feminist protest from our early histories of the field, deferring them to the no doubt overdue women's intervention within the context of practice at the CCCS, which often figures as a signpost in stories derived from accounts of the closing phase of Hall's directorship in the late seventies. The Grounding the prehistory of cultural studies in the context of a burgeoning global women's movement might also combat the long decried habit within histories of the field to, as Elizabeth Long noted in 1989, exclude and marginalize its own feminist practitioners. The many of whose work was highlighted by Sarah Franklin, Celia Lury, and Jackie Stacy in their important collection *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* (1991) which collects research by feminists at the CCCS on popular culture, science, and the media. Similar inquires formed an important dimension of the center's earliest phases, a fact further attested to in in recent work from Dworkin. Moreover, it guides our attention to the oft-overlooked role of women within the British New Left itself.

In the annals of the British New Left the names of Sheila Benson, Dorothy Wedderburn, Jean McCrindle, or Lynn Segal—to name only a few, who happen to have written about their experiences—rarely appear alongside Stuart Hall, Edward Thompson, and Raymond Williams. This omission speaks to what McCrindle famously described in 1987 as "an almost pathological absence of women" on the mastheads, and in the pages, of the movement's key journals like *The New Reasoner, ULR* and *New Left Review* that belies their centrality to the political activities and organizational leadership of the

movement. McCrindle herself served as the coordinator for the Scottish New Left Clubs, Benson was active in the global women's movement working at the WIDF in East Berlin from 1955-56 before becoming an instrumental figure in the London New Left Club serving on its executive committee, and Wedderburn, a regular speaker at CND rallies, later contributed to the *May Day Manifesto* in 1968. In part, Benson suggests, radical women were drawn to the New Left precisely because its structure and activities seemed overwhelmingly hospitable to women's involvement by comparison with the attitudes of traditional socialist groups such as the Labour Party or the trade unions. In her own reflections Segal suggests that this disjuncture between women's perceived experience of the movement and posterity's blindness to their contributions within it, is symptomatic of the wider atmosphere of "mistrust and hostility" between the sexes during the fifties. This same hostility animated much of the popular AYM novels alluded to above, at a time when abortion remained illegal and most people lacked access to contraception.

Finally, centering our story of 1956 on the "big bang" of the Women's March in South Africa represents a challenge to how we construct intellectual histories more generally. Few disciplines have done more to consolidate ideological narratives of masculine dominance and power than history. And within the practice of historiography perhaps no subfield has been as profoundly, even embarrassingly, besot with a masculinist perspective than intellectual history. Text-bound accounts of singular genius authors or select groups of coterie writers and their audiences offer the most well-trod strategies for centering intellectual historical narratives. In a subfield that also suffers from a bias towards the thought of early modern Europe, these approaches favor certain modes of professional activity that have been historically inhospitable to full participation by women as unsung scholars in their own right. They also obscure other forms of work done by intellectuals—whether construed as individuals, or groups of individuals engaged in the labor of political or cultural struggle—as artists, organizers, and interlocutors within social movements and political milieus. A recent counterexample to these disciplinary habits can be found in the work of scholars like Kristen Ghodsee whose latest book, Second World, Second Sex: Socialist Women's Activism and Global Solidarity during the Cold War offers a more socially grounded history of intellectual struggle in its excavation of the work of women activists in Bulgaria and Zambia during the UN Decade for Women as they navigated state institutions and international relations to champion women's rights and promote an analysis of patriarchal oppression as embedded within global structures of capitalist exploitation and imperialist conquest. 54 Historical accounts like Ghodsee's stand as illuminating examples of the myriad ways we might re-narrate the stories we tell about cultural studies, locating early research on the role of gender in popular culture, the media, and medicine within a wider history of the global women's movement.

Conclusion

Hopefully these brief historical glosses of alternative "big bang" moments elsewhere in 1956 have demonstrated that although the geopolitical crises of Suez and Hungary may have lit the fires of several latent left activist formations, catalyzing them into a "new" left coalition of independent socialism in Britain, the coordinates of a new *cultural* politics unfolding around race relations, consumerism, everyday life, social class, and women's oppression were already at play as fracturing axes in the conjuncture of British, and indeed global, social life during the 1950s.

While the well-worn list of canonical texts by Hoggart, Williams, Thompson, or Hall attempted to capture these energies and concerns, they did not inaugurate them *as concerns* in the first place. Nor, it could arguably be said, did they always originate them in theory. The theory of culture enacted, albeit in mediated and aestheticized form, by Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners*, the IG's *This Is Tomorrow*, or through the opposing

politics of gendered difference represented by the AYM's cult of virility and the FEDSAW activists in South Africa, might be treated as progenitors of the field's central concerns and preoccupations—emblematic of both its hereditary shortcomings and its horizons of possibility.

Of course, these are only four events plucked from a multitude of aesthetic and critical interventions and labor in struggle by intellectuals across the globe. For example, in the American context one might also point to key flashpoints in the fight for civil rights in the South or Elvis Presley's first televised appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* as embodying equally determinative turns in the intellectual history of cultural studies beyond the centrality of the New Left. In this sense, the importance of New Left politics for the emergence of cultural studies might be reconceived. Rather than treating the "first" New Left as privileged progenitors of the politics of cultural studies, we might describe their role as one which provided, for a short time from 1957 to 1964, a discrete frame of political analysis, and in their journals, a platform for articulating a response to a whole range of anxieties, interventions, and contestations already under way in postwar culture and society that would prove to be of significant import to the work and aims of cultural studies in the years following 1964.

Notes

- 1. Stuart Hall, "The Life and Times of the First New Left," *New Left Review* 61 (Jan-Feb 2010): 177–196.
- 2. Hall, "Life and Times," 177.
- 3. Stuart Middleton, "'Affluence' and the Left in Britain, c.1958–1974," *English Historical Review* 129, no. 536 (February 2014): 110.

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- 4. For a fuller account of these debates around the meaning and implications of "affluence" for left political discussions in the immediate postwar period and beyond, see the above article in its entirety: Stuart Middleton, "'Affluence' and the Left in Britain," 107–138.
- 5. For my characterization of the background of *The Reasoner* and *Universities & Left Review* as well as the characterization of their members and editorial content, I have largely relied upon Dennis Dworkin's account in *Cultural Marxism in Postwar Britain: History, the New Left, and the Origins of Cultural Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997). For a more detailed recounting of the birth of this moment of two crises and two journals as I've conceptualized it here see especially his Chapter 1 "Lost Rights" (10–44) and Chapter 2 "Socialism at Full Stretch" (45–78).
- 6. In fact, Morris was the object of Thompson's first scholarly book, an intellectual biography: William Morris (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1955). Dorothy Thompson was another leading figure in the Historian's Group active around The New Reasoner, and she later published important work on the history of English radicalism examining the Chartist movement. See Dorothy Thompson, The Early Chartists (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1971) and The Chartist Experience: Studies in Working-Class Radicalism and Culture 1830–60 (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1982).
- 7. Hall, "Life and Times," 178. 🔁
- 8. Editorial Statement, *Universities and Left Review* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1957).
- Claude Bourdet, "The French Left," Universities and Left Review 1, no. 1 (Spring 1957): 13–16; Lelio Basso, "The Italian Left," Universities and Left Review 1, no. 2 (Summer 1957): 23–26; Lindsay Anderson, "Free Cinema," Universities and Left Review 1, no. 2 (Summer 1957): 52–52; M. S. Hasan, "Nationalism and the Middle East Economy," Universities and Left Review 1, no. 3 (Winter 1958): 19–22; Karel

- 10. Hall, "Life and Times," 178.
- 11. Stuart Hall, "A Sense of Classlessness," *Universities and Left Review* 1, no. 5 (Autumn 1958), 26.
- 12. There are numerous examples of this general trend across the entire run of *Universities and Left Review*, including several pieces by Raymond Williams. However, some notable early examples that engage explicitly with the category of culture include John Dixon & Sidney Lubin, "Schools, Class, Society" *Universities and Left Review* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1957); Michael Kullman, "The Anti-Culture Born of Despair," *Universities and Left Review* 1, no. 4 (Summer 1958); and Graham Martin, "A Culture In Common," *Universities and Left Review* 1, no. 5 (Autumn 1958).
- 14. To single out just a few key instances from Dworkin's account as evidence, take for example his framing of the move towards de-Stalinization in the activities and writing of English Marxist historians and Communist Party affiliates like E.P. Thompson: "Thompson's work felt the effects of an uncritical acceptance of the Party's version of politics and theory. . . . It was not until 1956 that he began to openly question it" (Dworkin, 22); and "After 1956, historians and cultural theorists became acutely aware of the conflict between structure and agency, determinism and freedom in Marxism" (Dworkin, 27).
- 15. Lin Chun, *The British New Left* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993); Michael Kenny, *The First New Left: British Intellectuals After Stalin* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1995).
- 16. Chun, British New Left, 1–19.
- 17. Madeline Davis, "The Marxism of the British New Left," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 11, no. 3 (2006): 335–358; Madeline Davis, "The Origins of the British New Left," in 1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977, ed. Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth (London: Palgrave, 2008): 45–56; Madeline Davis, "'Among the ordinary people': New Left Involvement in Working Class Political Mobilization 1956–1968," *History Workshop Journal* 86 (2018): 133–159. ▶
- 18. I'm referring here to the two widely referenced and influential retrospective essays written by Raymond Williams and Perry Anderson, both published in the second iteration of *New Left Review* under Anderson's editorship. See Perry Anderson, "The Left in the Fifties," *New Left Review* 29 (Jan-Feb 1965): 3−18; Raymond Williams, "The British Left" *New Left Review* 30 (Mar-Apr 1965): 18−26. ▶
- 19. Chun, British New Left, 27.

- 20. Rainer Winter, "The Politics of Cultural Studies: The New Left and the Cultural Turn in the Social Sciences and Humanities," in *A Revolution of Perception: Consequences and Echoes of 1968*, ed. Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey (New York & Oxford: Berghahn, 2014), 151.
- 21. Anderson, "Left in the Fifties," 16; Williams, "British Left," 22.
- 22. Alan O'Connor, "The New Left and the Emergence of Cultural Studies," in *British Marxism and Cultural Studies: Essays on a Living Tradition*, ed. Phlip Bounds and David Berry (London: Routledge, 2016), 45.
- 23. O'Connor, "The New Left," 45. 🖸
- 24. Hall, "Life and Times," 190–196. 2
- 25. Andrew Milner, "Left Out? Marxism, the New Left and Cultural Studies," in *Again Dangerous Vision: Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. J.R. Burgmann (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2018), 341.
- 26. Paul Gilroy, "British Cultural Studies and the Pitfalls of Identity," in *Cultural Studies & Communications*, ed. James Curran and David Morley (London: Arnold, 1996), 44.
- 27. Paul Smith, "Birmingham—Urbana-Champaign 1964–1990 or, Cultural Studies," in *A Companion to Critical and Cultural Theory*, ed. Imre Szeman, Sarah Blacker, and Justin Sully (Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 60.
- 28. See Tracy Hargreaves, "The Uses of Literacy, the 'Angry Young Men' and British New Wave," in *Richard Hoggart: Culture and Critique*, ed. Michael Bailey and Mary Eagleton, (London: Critical Cultural and Communications Press, 2011); Jeremy Seabrook, "Richard Hoggart and Working-Class Virtues," in *Richard Hoggart: Culture and Critique*. See also Nick Bentley, *Radical Fictions: The English Novel in the Fifties* (Peter Lang AG, 2007); Ben Clarke et al., eds. *Understanding Richard Hoggart: A Pedagogy of Hope* (Hoboken, Wiley Blackwell, 2012).
- 29. Susan Brook, *Literature and Cultural Criticism in the 1950s: The Feeling Male Body* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
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- 31. Carol A. Stabile, quoted in Robert W. Gehl, "Introduction: Years in Cultural Studies," *Lateral* 8, no. 1 (2019).
- 32. Ron Ramdin, *The Making of the Black Working Class in Britain* (London: Verso, 2017), 187–232. 2
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- 42. Anne Massey, *Out of The Ivory Tower: The Independent Group and Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 10–11.
- 43. Stuart Hall quoted in Dworkin, Cultural Marxism, 58-59.
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Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019) Years in Cultural Studies

1968—A Turning Point in Cultural Studies

Charnell Peters, Lulu Olaniyan, Duncan C Stewart and Julia Berger

ABSTRACT This essay traces how social movements throughout the globe in 1968 heavily influenced the development, operations, and identity of cultural studies. Thus, 1968 remains a critical turning point for cultural studies and its goals. To demonstrate this, global struggles contextualize the micro expressions of unrest at The University of Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS). Secondly, the essay examines how the discipline negotiated studies of marginalized and subaltern cultures within this social context. And finally, an analysis of key texts of 1968 demonstrates how the sociopolitical moment produced work that is emblematic of cultural studies' pursuits. Ultimately, the essay questions how our contemporary moment might necessitate new pursuits in scholarly praxis, like the moment of 1968 called forth new directions in cultural studies.

The year of 1968 remains a critical turning point for cultural studies because it was rife with social movements throughout the globe that altered understandings and experiences of nation, belonging, and peoplehood. We argue that these events heavily influenced the development, operations, and identity of cultural studies, as cultural studies interrogated the many dimensions of the sociopolitical moment. In this essay, we first contextualize the micro expressions of unrest in the University of Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) through an analysis of the macro social events of the time. Secondly, we examine how the discipline negotiated studies of marginalized and subaltern cultures within this social context. And finally, we demonstrate how the sociopolitical moment produced key texts within cultural studies and texts to which scholars responded. Ultimately, we question how our contemporary moment might necessitate new pursuits in scholarly praxis, like the moment of 1968 called forth new directions in cultural studies.

Global Social Events, 1968

Student protests in Birmingham at the CCCS in 1968 were so influential that scholars have articulated the history of cultural studies through descriptors of pre- and post-1968. This nomenclature—apparent in Connell and Hilton's account of the last fifty years of cultural studies—references the shift in political tone that occurred in the wake of the year's events. The language also demarcates an internal shift in the discipline that encouraged more outward-facing and direct politics that are not separate from, but a part of, the cultural studies project. This section gives a brief overview of global protest in 1968 to provide historical context for the task of cultural studies at the time.

As a symbol and reality of a tumultuous time, 1968 saw social movements that spanned continents and politics. The anti-nuclear movement, antiwar demonstrations, women's liberation movement, and global environmental movement all had major events and new beginnings in 1968 that contributed to the global cultural revolution with which cultural studies was attempting to come to terms as a discipline. Further, if it can be confined to a beginning and endpoint, 1968 is often considered the climax of the civil rights movement

in the US. In addition to student protests and occupations in Birmingham, the United States witnessed its share of student agitation led by similar paradigmatic disruptions in the humanities that made claims about the inseparability of politics, ethics, and academia. The accumulation of social protest was indicative of what was being called the New Left. This Left steps away from democratic reform, without letting go of it completely, and instead opposes structural conditions of capitalism, racism, sexism, and war. Its focus on structures of oppression encourages political strategies and tactics that are direct, physical, and revolutionary.

Public memory in the United States often sees 1968 as a year of social upheaval, with college campuses and students in the center of the unrest. For example, the Columbia University protests in that year were in opposition to a segregated gymnasium and institutional support of the Vietnam War due to the university's membership in the International Defense Analyses, a weapon's research think tank. Students occupied several university buildings, held four hostages, and were forcibly removed by the New York City police. Additionally, the Weather Underground was formed on the organizational foundations of Students for a Democratic Society. Their national conventions between the years of 1968 and 1969 were the site of college students debating the merits of armed struggle versus passivity. Ultimately, the national council decided to go "underground," endorsing radical and disruptive tactics. Social movement historians mark this event as an endorsement of New Left politics, as college activists lost faith in reformist and electoral tactics for change.

In line with the tone of the New Left, the Black Power movement was a radical flank of the civil rights movement that encouraged liberatory education reform, economic reparations, and in some cases Black separatism. Students and activists across the nation were becoming increasingly wary of peaceful protest. As the 1960s continued, the Black Power movement escalated toward revolutionary tactics. The year 1968 witnessed armed conflict between Panthers and police, nationwide arrests, and statewide repression of the Black Power movement.

Police actions during 1968 were indicative of state strategies policing social movements in the wake of unprecedented radical organization and student protests throughout the globe. 5 It was later revealed that the FBI had files on Bob Feldman, who revealed Columbia's investment in weapons research. Further, a 1968 FBI memo showed that COINTELPRO was designed to police the Black Power movement and prevent it from gaining respectability among the public. 1968 was also the year the FBI tapped the phone of Fred Hampton, chairman of the Black Panther Party, whom they would later murder. It was also 1968 when Martin Luther King Jr. was planning the Poor People's Campaign and was assassinated. In Poland, the Government waged a propaganda campaign against student protest that labeled them Zionists and anti-Russian. In Mexico, student protests against military authoritarianism ended in the state army shooting over 100 students. In France, a student protest resulted in a general strike that state police met with violence before being overwhelmed. Indeed the general strike in France involved over a quarter of the population. 10 1968 was also the year of the Prague Spring Reforms, a some seven-month protest of the Soviet Union's attempt to suppress the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia liberalization reforms after Dubček's "socialism with a human face speech," wherein he argued for the need to decrease censorship and dismantle rule by repression while maintaining sound socialist economics. The USSR, in turn, occupied Czechoslovakia with over a half-million military personnel. 11

The details of domestic and global agitation in 1968 and their subsequent repression are numerous. Agitation was direct, and the responses throughout the year and afterward were just as material and physical on collegiate campus as it was throughout international

city squares. These social events and their political and material consequences presented new theoretical challenges for the discipline of cultural studies. What notions of culture, nation, race, and peoplehood were disrupted and/or solidified through these movements of revolutionary thought? How did subcultures and "deviants" constitute communities that negotiated norms of dominant culture? And what orders were being maintained by the state and mass-culture responses to protest? Dennis Dworkin explores the role cultural Marxism played in postwar Britain and argues that the *New Left Review*, edited by Stuart Hall, was a key instrument in distributing radical thought throughout colleges, internationally. 12 Though Dworkin traces cultural Marxism's rise to prominence and descent to less relevance in the discipline throughout multiple years, it held major influence in the classrooms, student groups, and actions of organizers in 1968. Cultural studies was influenced by and influenced the political uprisings of the year.

Changes within the Centre at Birmingham

In 1968, the political setting and predicted distributions of power internationally were as uncertain as the future of cultural studies. Scholars had only recently taken up a serious analysis of culture in the late 1950s in Britain, and Centre reports indicate that within the discipline, scholars were still seeking to consolidate understandings of their innovative interdisciplinary scholarship. 13 Student protests in Birmingham would continue to change the trajectory of the discipline. During a student occupation of Birmingham's Great Hall in November and December of 1968, students demanded unity among faculty and students and complete democratization of the university, its content, and its future, including a shift in leadership at the CCCS. School authorities believed the Centre was behind much of this activity. Richard Hoggart, the CCCS founder and director, admits they were heavily involved in the protest activity at the time, with Hoggart himself taking part in a teachin. 14 This created a greater connection between what cultural studies scholars did in the academy and a critical praxis indicative of their scholarship. CCCS students recall the active sit in as a transformative moment for their intellectual work. $\frac{15}{2}$ This transformation is one that forwarded the same sort of global New Left ethos described above. The goal and imagination of radical reform became an increasing focus and possibility amongst the cultural studies discipline. Praxis became a focus and students were encouraged to engage in small scale actions that were representative of the same political commitments their academic work forwarded. 16

In addition, the Centre itself underwent changes that directly influenced the direction of the discipline. The protests gave way to a concerted effort at CCCS meetings to incorporate student voices. ¹⁷ Hall considered this an attempt to bring the students' challenge to authority into the political arena of the CCCS and to better understand the possibilities of the Centre. ¹⁸ The democratization led to student involvement in decision making, including involvement in the admissions process for new students applying to the CCCS program after current student interest in the process became evident. ¹⁹ 1968 also acted as a critical point in time that moved cultural studies away from its Hoggartarian roots. ²⁰ This was the same year that Hoggart resigned from CCCS for a position with UNESCO. Stuart Hall took Hoggart's place at the Centre after an external review from the University, which Hoggart believed was prompted by published reports claiming the CCCS was "promoting left-wing propaganda." ²¹ Ultimately, a myriad of changes within the Centre itself mirrored the social unrest of the time, and created new directions for cultural studies scholarship and praxis.

Marginalized and Subaltern Cultural Studies

Larger questions brought forth by 1968's social events continued to position cultural studies as a formative area in which interdisciplinary inquiry could widen and deepen

studies of power, dominance, and societal organization. This section examines the site of marginalized or subaltern cultural studies, which is an imperfect label for a subsection of a discipline that always and already denies formalization and elitism. In 1968, the anti-discipline of cultural studies was an emergent but smaller field; the CCCS had only been officially institutionalized four years earlier in 1964, and many of the Birmingham School's larger and well-known theorizations and critical contributions came later during the next two decades. Furthermore, the CCCS would influence cultural study of the subaltern in the following three decades.

Subaltern studies was born out of the impulse to bring together cultural studies and postcolonial studies within specific South Asian contexts. Founding editor of the Subaltern Studies publication and associated group Ranajit Guha expressed how rational critiques of postcolonial India expressed solely dominant perspectives on the state which obscured and denied the diverse existences and histories of the masses.²² To combat the elitist discourse and statist ideologies, the Subaltern Studies Group, based out of Sussex with contributors throughout the Indian diaspora from Oxford to Calcutta, published the first volume of the journal in 1982, ultimately seeking to represent the histories of the subaltern. 23 This group's critical recognition of the subversive role of the subaltern in rupturing traditional histories and practices of (inter)national elites inspired thinkers of a different context to create the Latin American Subaltern Studies Group in 1993.²⁴ This group, comprised of thinkers like John Beverley and Ileana Rodriguez, reconceptualized the nature of nation, state, and "the people" by examining the Mexican, Cuban, and Nicaraguan Revolutions. 25 In an ultimate critique of the state, the Latin American Subaltern Studies Group sought to consider and unveil alternative forms of territorialization, frontiers, regional logics, and pan-continental identities. 26 Both the South Asian and Latin American studies groups deeply problematized how subaltern peoples were represented within and between national ideologies.

Nevertheless, by 1968, cultural studies claimed a distinct purpose to describe and analyze the ways that ideology and hegemony permeate and construct culture. 27 "Founding fathers" Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams envisioned their own cultural project as an endeavor with a marginalized focus, as both Hoggart and Williams came from workingclass backgrounds and felt at odds with the petit-bourgeois and middle-class cultures which surrounded them as academics. 28 Working papers in cultural studies demonstrate a commitment by scholars to studying this marginalization, including essays on workingclass kids and career placement, Black labor and the working class in England, and women in the labor market, to name a few. 29 Hoggart particularly proposed cultural studies as a program to combat elitism within British education, specifically through deconstructing the hegemonic notion that "high culture" was more valuable than "everyday life." The annual Centre report of 1968-69 demonstrates a wide variety of studies committed to this kind of everyday culture, including studies on popular music, serial radio drama, and contemporary genre fiction. <u>31</u> In these ways, cultural studies at the time did have a focus on marginalization. In addition, due to some influence from the Frankfurt School, the early scholars at the Centre were committed to Marxist political aims and interpreted culture from a critical perspective, attending to structures of power and oppression.

However, although the stated intentions of cultural studies as an emancipatory, critical, and anti-disciplinarian project in 1968 seemed to center marginalized voices, cultures, and knowledges, the discipline had significant roots within the ivory towers of the European academe and, in many ways, implicitly assumed a Western perspective. Even our analysis thus far has centered a particular European institution, though we have grappled with global movements. In this same way, historic representations of the field of cultural studies often place the Birmingham School as *the* progenitor of the

epistemological project of critical cultural inquiry, which signifies a limited focus on Western institutions as arbiters of complete knowledge. Thus, much of the critical work from women and queer folk, people of color, colonized peoples, and other marginalized groups outside of the UK had not been integrated into the "cultural studies canon." This critique does not mean that the Birmingham School was deliberately exclusionary; indeed, their research provided an important foundation for the understanding that mediated popular cultural messages bear political significance. As such, identifying marginalized cultural studies productively exposes the gaps and fragments in cultural studies histories, while affirming the institutional foundation provided by the Birmingham school.

Almost since its inception, contributors to the cultural studies project have criticized its limited perspectives on gender and women's issues, race and ethnicity, colonialism, sexuality, and other experiences of oppression. Cultural studies is a contextual(ized) project where discussion of "cultural change" evolved over its course to attend to a wider range of social, historical, and material conditions. Many of these significant changes happened after 1968; for example, Stuart Hall became the director of the Centre in 1969 and then began a larger role in coauthoring collective projects about racial identity, while the Women's Studies Group formed in the next decade, in 1974. In the 1980s, the label of "cultural studies" was more easily adopted by scholars in Latin America, Africa, and Asia who developed their own sub-disciplines and thus added to the canon. Therefore, although the mainstream sense of cultural studies did not extend far beyond the United Kingdom in 1968, the epistemological tradition at the heart of the discipline was alive and roaring during that period. This argument links critical cultural study from African and Caribbean scholars pre-1968 (those outside the canon) to the growth of marginalized studies after 1968 (those within the canon).

In many nations both within and outside of the Western world, the tail end of the 1960s exemplified the turbulence of the decade. The postwar climate in the United States and the United Kingdom saw, in new and different ways, conversations about citizenship and race emerge within the national consciousness; while the civil rights protesters in the United States urged voting rights, Southeast Asian immigrants and the Windrush generation of Caribbean immigrants in the United Kingdom struggled to make the United Kingdom home amidst Powellian xenophobic ideals. While new social movements and civil rights movements disrupted social ideologies within the United States and the United Kingdom, the political climate within the Third World was fundamentally shaken by changes in power structures. The Cold War had multiple international effects across Asia and Latin America. The whole decade was a massive period of decolonization for many African nations, although South Africa still struggled with apartheid. Freedom fighters Che Guevara and Martin Luther King Jr. were murdered during these years (1967 and 1968 respectively), while social movements worked to strengthen and reinvent their legacies. These global moments would punctuate the critical consciousness of scholars who published after 1968 and trigger the development of new methodologies and analyses.

Scholars of marginalized and subaltern cultural studies who published after 1968 were attentive to the major cultural and political changes of the 1960s. As previously mentioned, the field expanded to include African, Asian, and Latin American subfields of cultural studies, as well as media studies, postcolonial and decolonial, feminist, and queer branches. However, critical work of the marginalized did not simply begin in the 1960s; many scholars had already been doing this work for decades before 1968. Theorists such as George Padmore, Claudia Jones, and the Negritude thinkers of the Francophone African diaspora theorized culture, power, and nation during the 1930s and 1940s. Marxist scholar and critical theorist C. L. R. James analyzed collective power, race, and

class in *World Revolution* and *Black Jacobins*. Psychiatrist and critical theorist Frantz
Fanon and novelist and cultural studies scholar Sylvia Wynter wrote critical inquiries on
the state of the colonized and the colonizer in the 1950s—which were taken up by later
critical scholars like Paul Gilroy and Hazel Carby in the 1980s and 1990s. Later scholars in
the 1980s, such as those in the Subaltern Studies Group at the University of Sussex, used
a Foucauldian lens to problematize issues of colonialism and simply could not have done
so before Foucault's publishing in the 1970s. Thus, ideas of anti-colonial organization and
global racial order were not outside the realm of possibility for the discipline of cultural
studies in 1968, but it would take at least ten more years for critical thinkers in the
Western academy to build from that knowledge.

In 1968, the field of cultural studies had not existed for long, yet in many ways, it was growing into another form. The marginal and subaltern cultural studies scholars named here are not a comprehensive list, but rather, a preliminary identification of forms of knowledge outside the Western establishment that may align with what cultural studies came to be. As a contextual project, cultural studies still refuses canonization, but the canon must be interrogated nonetheless.

Influential and Representative Texts

A final way we trace the formation and identity of cultural studies within the year is to look briefly at texts that were meaningful to the discipline at the time. To do this, we connect Enoch Powell's "Rivers of Blood" speech to cultural studies scholarship on race, nation, and identity. And next, we look at a short 1968 working paper on American hippies by Stuart Hall, which exemplifies the prevalent methods and topics of inquiry in the discipline at the time. These disparate texts demonstrate how cultural studies scholarship responded to the moment of 1968.

The volatile movements described previously and the changing demographics of a postwar Britain created the climate for Enoch Powell's speech known as "Rivers of Blood," which described from a dominant perspective how the world "seemed, for a moment at least, turned upside down" during that year. 34 However, the upside-down world that the speech lamented was not broader protests and social unrest; rather, it was the perceived backward nature of Britain's demographics and politics, wherein non-white immigrants were seen as threats to the nation's character and to the British way of life for native white Britons. The speech acted as a lynchpin in the discourse surrounding nationality and race about which certain strains of cultural studies were concerned. Therefore, we see "Rivers of Blood" as a key text of 1968 that impacted cultural studies because of its farreaching consequences in political discourse to which cultural studies scholars responded with continued investigations into subcultures, deviancy, race, and nation. Cultural studies scholars took seriously their situated context and contributed their analyses of culture toward the understanding of the political moment that "Rivers of Blood" came to represent.

Enoch Powell delivered the infamous speech in Birmingham on April 20, 1968, at a meeting of the Conservative Political Centre. As Hickson noted, the speech—which victimized native English and cast immigrants from the West Indies, Africa, and Southeast Asia as villains—was not only infamous both for its content and for the fact that Powell circulated the speech to the press before its delivery. The press's role in circulating the speech as well as reactions to the speech is indicative of many cultural studies scholars' work on media that was concerned with the effects of media on public opinion and perception, as well as the relationship between various types of mass media, such as newspaper, radio, and television. Media became an increasingly central concern for cultural studies, evidenced by many endeavors, including the overseas contacts listed in

the Centre's 1968–69 report to programs such as the Annenberg School of Communications, at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Centre d'Études des Communications de Masse at École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris. The CCCS working papers also demonstrate such a commitment, through an entire section on studies of media, ranging from news making and crime to audience studies.

Cultural studies scholarship also intersected with this speech through inquiries of race and nationhood. In the speech, Powell spoke on behalf of the "thousands and hundreds of thousands" of silent people who felt similar anxiety and outrage about the rate of immigration and the changing racial demographics of England, which he called the nation "heaping up its own funeral pyre." Immigrants, according to Powell, were hordes of aliens out to sabotage the nation's (racial) character, overtake communities, and benefit from the country's generosity. Ultimately, Powell presented himself as a prophet, able to foresee the consequences of the Race Relations Bill and integration as an eventual race war and the subjugation of ordinary and white English people. 38 The result was a doctrine of Powellism, which was both anti (non-white) immigrant and pro-national sovereignty. 39 Several scholars in cultural studies at this time had been examining both sentiments about these immigrant communities and the communities themselves. Notably, Stuart Hall's work intersected with nationalistic and xenoracist discourse from the perspective of the immigrant communities that Powell derided. In fact, Hall responded to Enoch Powell on the BBC series *Talkback* 8 days after the speech. 40 And his scholarship on Black British communities centralized Black Britons within the context of national racial anxiety that undergirded Powell's speech. Hall continued to publish work about the very communities Powell villainized, including "Black Britons: Some Teenage Problems" in 1970, "Black Britons, Part One: Some Problems of Adjustment" in 1970, and "Our Neighbors From the West Indies" in Our Neighbors: Independent TV for schools in 1971.41

Other scholars within cultural studies responded to the discourse that Powell's speech came to represent, too. The Centre's 1968–69 report mentions Janet Mendelson's continued study of immigrant subcultures and Jack Hailey's work on the language of immigrant children. 42 Research in the CCCS Working Papers has been edited and thematized in a way that reflects the centrality of racial and national concerns. Exemplar texts from the collection, include Andy Green's "On the Political Economy of Black Labour and the Racial Structuring of the Working Class in England" and "The Organic Crisis of British Capitalism and Race: The Experience of the Seventies," which both seek to answer questions concerning the overall sociopolitical moment within which Powell spoke. 43

Finally, Powell's speech was representative of anxiety and moral panic felt in 1968 about deviant and subcultural groups. 44 His speech constructs the non-white immigrant as a deviant, which was a central concern for certain strands of cultural studies that centralized concerns of (cultural) deviancy. The National Deviancy Conference, formed in 1968 at University of York, was an important touchstone for cultural studies, 45 and (constructions of) deviancy continued to be a part of the cultural studies project, because deviancy so closely aligned with other commitments previously discussed, such as media (in promulgating ideological images and thus moral panic) as well as subcultures (who were constructed as deviant). Thus, Powell's speech importantly informed many areas of inquiry within cultural studies, including studies of deviancy, media, and national and racial identity.

A second paper indicative of cultural studies scholarship at the time and within the same discourse of nation and subculture is Stuart Hall's 1968 working paper, "The Hippies: An American 'Moment." This paper typifies work at the CCCS because it explicitly sought to articulate methods for researching cultural topics, it emerged in direct response to the

sociopolitical moment, and it was part of the working papers that scholars at the center self-published in incomplete form.

Cultural studies in 1968 pushed methodological boundaries to further understand the subjects of study. In 1969, Hoggart specifically identified the need for new languages or codes that could be used to better study society, which suggests that in 1968, scholars were still developing methods to suit their objects of study through their many disciplinary lenses. 47 In the 1970s, cultural studies began to look toward more linguistic structures, while sociological approaches developed for understanding the influence of media representations in society. 48 The working out of this methodology is evident in this unfinished version of Hall's paper. Hall undertook a phenomenological and thematic reading to generate an emic understanding of how hippies form a distinct cultural group. In the endnotes, Hall explicated his method in more detail. He called the two forces of his method the "phenomenological" moment and the "structuralist" moment. In the former, he sought to understand the Hippie meanings from the viewpoint of Hippies themselves, and through the latter, he made sense of those meanings through situating them within broader contexts. As seen through the 1966-67 Centre report, the bridging of studies of culture and society, the sociology of the arts, and critical evaluative studies was foundational to cultural studies and thus innovatively using the methods of these areas of study was also vital. 49 Seminars in the Centre focused methods of cultural analysis, as they helped bridge the gap between the methods of research in the various disciplines in which cultural studies was situated. 50

In "The Hippies: An American "Moment,"" Stuart Hall expanded upon a paper he had written in 1967 to analyze how the hippie style was "being brought more directly into play in the radical and political arena" and into the wider youth culture of the United States. ⁵¹ The paper represents a version of cultural studies scholarship that is concerned with the marginalized. Hall understood the hippies as part of a large system of values and meanings in white American middle-class society. In this draft, he begins to articulate how hippies exist at the nexus of tensions and contradictions within the present value system —how they offer counter-definitions to social norms. True to cultural studies work at the time, this paper analyzes their meanings in various ways, such as their linguistic choices and their style of dress. He also interrogates their relation to minoritized groups, such as the poor and Native Americans, as well as dominant groups, such as middle-class white America, demonstrating how deviance is a social construction that relies on the complex relationship between subcultures and dominant cultures. ⁵²

Ultimately, Hall's work in progress demonstrates the kind of work characteristic of cultural studies in 1968. It is a product of the social moment, and as it situates a subculture as a product of the sociopolitical context, it bolsters an analysis of macro structures with interrogations of micro communities and vice versa. The fact that Hall made this paper available to the scholarly community in its incomplete form also points to the democratic nature of the Centre at the time, which only deepened due to student protests of the year. A more complete version of the paper appears in the CCCS Working Papers collection, and the paper appeared the following year in *Student Power*. Later, in 1971, he published "The Hippies: Dissent in America." Ultimately, Hall saw hippies as an area of study of subcultural deviancy, which was a touchstone of cultural studies at the time. Hall is of course representative of cultural studies, although he resisted this kind of iconography throughout his career. This paper, even in its incomplete form in 1968, embodied much of the spirit and commitments of cultural studies at the time.

Conclusion

Only four years after the founding of the CCCS and the institutionalization of cultural studies, the discipline saw a critical turning point due to a wave of worldwide social movements that redefined not only left politics and conceptions of nation and identity but also the praxis and commitments of cultural studies. The year of 1968 demonstrates how the work of cultural studies cannot be separated from the sociopolitical moment. In this brief timeline, we have drawn together a representation of the discipline of cultural studies by means of the larger context of 1968. In doing so, we have shown how social movements at the Centre, areas of marginalized and subaltern study, and key texts are interrelated fragments that, when pieced together, help narrate how the identity of cultural studies was irrevocably influenced by the social reality of 1968. They also demonstrate how cultural studies responded to the moment with continued commitments to studies of marginalization, nation, race, deviancy, and media.

We understand the year of 1968 similarly to how cultural historian Kobena Mercer describes it—as a periodized moment in politics and identity, thus questioning "what is at stake in contemporary representations of 1968" that are subject to processes of "selective erasure and forgetting." 55 We investigate these public memories incompletely, with the knowledge that cultural studies cannot be easily distilled and with the intention that further work can, and should, be done. Ultimately, we not only look backward but also to our present and future, as we ask what our own social moments (will) necessitate from our collective intellectual labor.

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Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019) Years in Cultural Studies

1988-The Crisis in Marxist Cultural Theory

Sebastiaan Gorissen, Elise Homan and Ryan Kor-Sins

ABSTRACT 1988 signaled a major year for cultural studies with the publication of several significant texts: The collection of essays *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, the essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" by Gayatri Spivak, and *The Hard Road to Renewal*, Stuart Hall's book on Thatcherism. Despite these texts' divergent purposes, themes, and theories, they can be productively read together for their unique contributions to Marxist cultural theory. In the decades preceding their publication, a resurgence in scholarship devoted to Marxism had emerged, as scholars grappled with both its internal issues as well as its increasingly apparent insufficiency to explain current social formations. As Grossberg and Nelson explain in the introduction to *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Marxism was "paradoxically at once undergoing a renaissance of activity and a crisis of definition." In this essay, we elucidate how each text contributed to cultural studies and particularly highlight how each intervened on this redefinition of Marxism.

Introduction

This essay addresses the development, contestation, and challenging of Marxism by the field of cultural studies through the lens of three representative texts. By 1988, many cultural studies scholars believed they had reached a "crisis of Marxism." Although many theorists have argued that Marxism has experienced multiple "crises," each one has occurred differently—Marxism, as theory and praxis, has always responded to its historical context. Consequently, Marx's work was developed to address the periodic tendencies that emerged out of the contradictions within the capitalist production process and that manifested in the social formation. As Barry Smart posited, this new crisis "has a qualitatively different significance, for it denotes that a decisive moment or a historic turning point has been reached," and Smart located this change in the fact that the current crisis "encompasses Marxists, fellow-travelers and radical social theorists alike." Smart thus marked a more radical rethinking of Marxism due to his recognition that its most ardent supporters were engaging in serious critiques about its fundamental tenets.

In this essay, we approach this issue of the "crisis of Marxism" through an analysis of three defining publications from 1988—a major year for cultural studies with the publication of several significant texts: the collection of essays *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, the essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" by Gayatri Spivak, and *The Hard Road to Renewal*, Stuart Hall's book on Thatcherism. Despite these texts' divergent purposes and themes, they can be productively read together for their unique contributions to Marxist cultural theory and for their encapsulation of broader debates and conversations in the field. As Grossberg and Nelson explain in the introduction to *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Marxism was "paradoxically at once undergoing a renaissance of activity and a crisis of definition." In this essay, we explicate how each text contributed to cultural studies and elucidate how each intervened on this redefinition of Marxism. Each text was—and continues to be—contentious in multiple ways. For example, Paul Smith framed *Marxism*

and the Interpretation of Culture as an attack on Marxism, claiming that its "failures" discussed in that text actually stemmed from the ways cultural studies had developed as a discipline, not from problems within Marxism.⁴

To understand these texts, and the year as a whole, we first provide an overview of the "crisis of Marxism" that emerged in the 1980s and its relationship to cultural studies. To do this, we work to historicize this moment of crisis through the analysis and discussion of several important theorists within their specific postwar contexts. This historical context —approaching the neoliberal moment, at the same time that theorists turned away from Althusser and discourse analysis based in Gramsci's thought—grounds the framing and the reading of these three texts together.

The Crisis of Marxism

The controversial nature of these texts requires that they are understood within the broader theoretical changes and disputes of Marxist theory that preceded and situated them. Scholars grappled with both Marxist theory's internal issues as well as its increasingly apparent insufficiency to explain current social formations. Specifically, scholars such as Poulantzas, Hindess, and Hirst leveraged the Althusserian conceptions of "social formations" and "modes of production" to reorient cultural studies towards a Marxist frame. In his book, State, Power, Socialism, Poulantzas uses these concepts to combat the often "gestalt" framing of the capitalist "State" as a "simple realization of the-State-of-the-capitalist-mode-of-production." According to Poulantzas, "social formations are the actual sites of the existence and reproduction of modes of production. They are thus also the sites of the various forms of State, none of which can simply be deduced from the capitalist type of State understood as denoting an abstract formal object [...] A theory of the capitalist State can be elaborated only if it is brought into relation with the history of political struggles under capitalism." For Poulantzas, then, cultural studies scholarship that attends to the historically and politically situated articulations of social formations and modes of production are necessary in conceptualizing a more nuanced Marxist perspective on the capitalist State.

Hindess and Hirst also grapple with the implications of social formations and modes of production in their book *Mode of Production and Social Formation: An Auto-Critique of Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production.* The authors offer a new take on these terms by suggesting that the conception of modes of production needs to be "displaced" in favor of another Marxist concept, the "relations of production." As the authors state, "we argue that it is necessary to develop (instead of concepts of modes of production) concepts of relations of production and their conditions of existence [...] As the concept of modes of productions is displaced, so the concepts of relations of production and social formations gain theoretical importance." The authors' proposed shift towards "relations of production" here allows for a more holistic approach to studying how social formations are relationally constituted. Both of these texts concomitantly call for more nuanced scholarship about the capitalist State mediated by turning to Althusser's treatment of social formations, further solidifying a renewed vigor for Marxist scholarship in cultural studies during this era.

Throughout the twentieth century, major sociopolitical events initiated a new, stronger confrontation of Marxism. These international sociopolitical events, beginning with the outbreak of World War I, called into question Marxist notions of history and revolution. When the Second International, the federation of socialist parties and trade unions, supported and participated in the war, it was perceived as "the betrayal of proletarian internationalism" and its opposition to nationalism and militarism. According to Douglas Kellner, this conflict led to the collapse of the Second International and "tarnished its

image as a revolutionary movement." In addition, despite the seeming appearance of "a confirmation of Marxism in the Russian Revolution of 1917," 10 the post-World War I era saw no other significant revolutions of working-class people. 11 Later, Kellner explains, the rise of fascism in the Second World War revealed that "history was not progressing towards democratic socialism and the liberation of the working-class." 12

The new structure of class relations that formed after World War II continued to trouble Marxist theory regarding conceptions of the revolutionary subject and working-class movements. As advanced capitalist societies experienced "unparalleled affluence and stabilization of the economy," it became clear that capitalism was not moving toward collapse but instead was gaining strength. 13 This phenomenon also shaped the working class into a consumer-oriented "mass society" through the increase of the "cultural industries," 14 which seemed to diminish the possibilities for revolution, and, according to Smart, established the "apparent vitality of the bourgeois order." Herbert Marcuse, a Marxist scholar working within the Frankfurt School, produced one of the most important critiques of US postwar consumer society in his seminal 1964 text, One-Dimensional Man. 16 In this book, Marcuse explained how the United States had entered a state of monopoly capitalism which created uniformity and resulted in "effectively neutralizing all opposition and eliminating the second dimension of any kind of critical thinking." 17 In addition to advancing Marxist theory, this text also helped to mobilize the New Left in the 1960s. 18 While attempting to account for this growth of global capitalism, Marxism also had to address the rise of Stalinism and its claims to socialism. Marxist scholars became increasingly critical of the "actually existing socialisms" as manifested in the societies of Eastern Europe, which suggested that there was no longer any model for socialism. 19 Although they argued that Stalin's authoritarian regime did not represent the Marxist conception of socialism, they found that classical Marxist theory lacked compelling ways to critique it.

Finally, the events of 1968 in France and Czechoslovakia challenged conventional Marxist political analysis. The nature of the protests evaded Marxist interpretation for several reasons: they did not stem from an economic critique; they were not based on working-class organization; and they mobilized outside of the trade unions and the political parties of the Left. ²⁰ The protests also formed around new "social subjects or new political groupings" that advocated for issues such as education, women's liberation, ecology, and gay liberation. ²¹ Although these events were significant for changing political vocabularies, they ultimately failed to impede the global intensification of capitalism, which in the 1980s transformed into Thatcherism (and its American parallel of Reaganism) and the international institution of neoliberalism.

The occurrence of these events interacted with and influenced the development of theory. Throughout this time, theorists had been revising classical Marxist tenets, focusing mainly on its economic determinism and class reductionism in explaining social formations and historical change. ²² The Frankfurt School, established in 1923, created an intellectual group including Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, and Max Horkheimer, that was committed to advancing Marxist theory within late capitalism and with a more focused attention to culture. ²³ Later in the 1950s, the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham emerged as another scholarly organization attuned to questions of culture that worked broadly within a Marxist framework. The CCCS founded itself as working within a "humanist Marxism," which emphasized the centrality of human experience in Marxist understandings of society and culture. ²⁴ However, throughout the 1970s Louis Althusser explicitly theorized *against* the humanist Marxists. ²⁵ Althusser shifted to a structural understanding of Marxism in which "the conscious subject is no longer located at the center of social activity." ²⁶ Althusser reconceptualized the social formation "as a

structure of relatively autonomous levels of social practices" that complicated the economic determinism argument of classical Marxism and offered a more discursive conception of ideology and subjectivity. 27 Although scholars both accepted and criticized elements of Althusser's theory, it had important effects on both Marxism and cultural studies as it was taken up in various ways. 28

Colin Sparks illustrates how Althusser's work also opened up the possibility for better integrating the ideas of Antonio Gramsci, whose work had only been translated and widely read in the 1950s. ²⁹ Scholars increasingly turned to Gramscian theories because they offered better ways to explain ideological formation, the phenomena of power and politics outside of the economic level, and how to account for subject-positions outside of class. 30 Particularly Gramsci's reflections of ideology and hegemony—articulated in his Prison Notebooks during his incarceration by the Italian Fascist regime between 1926 and 1935-would become embraced as viable alternatives to the concept of "Marxism-Leninism." As Jan Rehmann recognizes, "Gramsci's approach is characterised by a clear, though mostly implicit, anti-Stalinist perspective." Fundamentally opposing economism and class-reductionism, Gramsci approached the concept of ideology not merely in terms of ideas, but rather "as a material ensemble of hegemonic apparatuses in civil society." 32 Importantly, this approach is fundamentally different from the dualistic separation of the "material" and the "ideal" in Marxism-Leninism, as Gramsci posited societal determination as a philosophy of praxis rather than as an objective reality reflected in human thought. Ideology is not to be understood as a direct expression of the economic, Gramsci asserted, nor as a characteristic of great individual personalities. Alternatively, as Rehmann posits, "Gramsci described as 'ideology' those interpretations and explanations that reproduce such a domestication of popular movements in an uncritical way by justifying it or rendering it invisible or 'natural.'"33

Gramsci, less concerned with the development of a systematic theory of ideology than with the elaboration of the specific categories of his theory of hegemony, attempted to close a problematic absence in contemporary Marxist thought. Denouncing the Marxist presumption that winning the support of the population could only succeed after a proletarian revolution, Gramsci asserts in its stead that "[there] can and there must be a 'political hegemony' even before assuming government power, and in order to exercise political leadership or hegemony one must not count solely on the power and material force that is given by government." As Rehmann summarizes, "[Gramsci] thus placed at the centre of his theoretical project what the development of state-socialism had neglected with dys-hegemonic and ultimately self-defeating consequences," which allows for the formulation of a theory of hegemony rid of totalizing tendencies. 35

Throughout the 1970s, scholars used Gramsci's work with post-structural linguistic concepts to develop "articulation theory," which posited "the radical non-determinacy of ideological discourses." 36 Articulation theory offered new avenues for examining politics, resistance, and subjectivity, and it became a dominant framework for cultural studies research. 37 Stuart Hall would later expand upon this framework in his theoretical consideration of discourse as the "dis-articulation" and "re-articulation" of ideological formations. 38 Consequently, Gramscian critique of ideology through the lens of Hall effectively becomes what Rehmann terms "an 'interruptive discourse' that does not primarily unmask the ideological bloc of the opponent from outside, but intervenes in it so as to decompose it, reshape it and build effective elements into a new order." 39

Nevertheless, it is pertinent to underline that the scholarly embrace of Gramsci marked a "post-Marxist" move, meaning that these theories maintained a clear break from classical Marxism. Consequently, as seen in the various historical developments along with the

throughout the twentieth century, by the 1980s the notion of a current "crisis of Marxism" had been confirmed. Stuart Hall, Ernesto Laclau. and Chantal Mouffe may well be considered amongst the scholars who moved away from classical Marxism. Laclau and Mouffe's 1985 book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* would prove to be a turning point in the history of socialist theory, referring to left-wing thought as standing "at a crossroads." Calling for the deconstruction, rather than dismissal, of Marxist traditions, the authors seek to redefine the concept of "hegemony" as intended by Gramsci. In particular, Laclau and Mouffe posit the concept as instrumental in explaining the increased dissemination of "subject positions" in late-capitalist societies, and as potentially providing a more coherent theoretical framework for socialist action within these socially and interpersonally dispersing societies.

Laclau and Mouffe recognize an essentialist paradigm—in which the "proletariat" and the "bourgeoisie" are considered *a priori* enemies—as a major problem within Marxist thought, as it reduces all other forms of antagonism to a consideration of economic class. Consequently, the authors problematize the Marxist calls for a transformation of the relations of production and dismiss as fantastical the resultant "communist utopia." As Marxist thought reduces the complexities of the multifarious societal and political antagonisms to the order of the economic base, Laclau and Mouffe posit their theoretical exploits as "post-Marxist" in an affirmation of the predominance of the political over the consideration of the economic base.

Drawing upon the work of French poststructuralist philosophers in order to support their oppositional reading of the Marxist tradition, Laclau and Mouffe posit the critique of the traditional subject of action as providing the foundation for a radically democratic, authentically left-wing political theory, eradicating the essentialism at the heart of the pregiven, class-based identities of "proletariat" and "bourgeoisie." As the authors state, relinquishing these premises of Marxist thought allows for a non-dichotomous concept of hegemony: "We will thus retain from the Gramscian view the logic of articulation and the political centrality of the frontier effects, but we will eliminate the assumption of a single political space as the necessary framework for those phenomena to arise." Democratic struggles are precisely those that involve a plurality of political spaces.

1988-Defining Publication: *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*

It is this historical and intellectual conjuncture about democratic struggles which Grossberg and Nelson insert in Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture. Nelson and Grossberg's introduction states that the text's purpose is a re-centering of Marxism as an interpretive tool for "the entire field of cultural practices" and situates itself within this evolution of Marxist thought in the postwar period. 42 Their introduction provides a version of the trajectory leading to the current crisis of Marxism previously discussed, but their narrative more specifically attends to how Marxist analyses of culture developed during this time, explaining how studies of Marxism and culture had long been scarce because "culture itself was always viewed as secondary and often as epiphenomenal." 43 Over time, however, the convergence of forces—intellectual, historical, and political brought about a more capacious view of culture and its role in Marxist thought and politics. As Marxism continued to come into dialogue with a plurality of theoretical discourses and critical vocabularies, Nelson and Grossberg explain, the tradition had not only been expanded but also problematized. In the context of the book, the strongest challenges to Marxism involve critiques of its assertion of a "predefined and stable set of subjects" and, significantly, its seeming inability to adequately account for other types of

oppression not reducible to class conflict. 44 The essays in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* address these issues in various ways as they reveal the influence of poststructural, postmodern, and postcolonial perspectives on Marxist thought. However, despite these various reformulations, the authors are each committed to refining and ultimately strengthening Marxist project, not only for theory but also for practice. For example, Henri Lefebvre's chapter argues that supplementing this theory with outside concepts facilitates "Marxism is an instrument of research and discovery" that seeks to change the world. 45 In addition, Richard Schacht's contribution to the book is to explicate the normative character of Marx's thought found within his texts, arguing that it "*must* have a genuinely normative character if it is to serve as an impetus and guide to revolutionary praxis." 46 Thus, the interventions and rethinkings in this text all work to reinvigorate Marxism as an interpretive framework for the cultural realm.

It is important to note that the book emerged out of a series of events organized by the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1983. 47 Throughout the summer, the Unit held the Marxist Literary Group annual meeting in conjunction with a group of courses that concluded with a large international conference, all centered around Marxism in recognition of the centennial year of Marx's death. 48 The book, which includes thirty-seven essays by prominent figures from a variety of disciplines, represents the type of collaborative intellectual work that characterizes cultural studies scholarship in general. Multiple chapters began as conference presentations, and many of them contain transcripts of the discussion periods, offering a glimpse into the tensions and disputes between these scholars as they reckon with the various challenges to and redefinitions within Marxist discourse that had appeared in the preceding decades. This context thus shows how the text is deeply situated in the "crisis of Marxism" at this time.

The essays in the text include more explicit Gramscian or articulation-theory based studies (West, Hall, Laclau, Mouffe), while others perform rereadings of canonical Marxist texts (Balibar, Negt). Additionally, several case studies, such as those by Fernando Reyes Matta and Hugo Achugar, rearticulate Marxism in a global context and in dialogue with non-Western media and discourses. Overall, *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* reveals how major scholars grappled with the "crisis of Marxism" that consolidated throughout the late twentieth century. Both the essays and the discussion sections illustrate these scholars in the process of working through important ideas that would be published later, including two texts also published in this year and discussed in this essay, Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" and Stuart Hall's book on Thatcherism, *The Hard Road to Renewal*.

1988-Defining Publication: "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

Cultural studies' crisis in Marxism in the 1980s complicated the implicitly Western, working-class subject that ran through much of Marxist critique. According to Morris, "Some of the most radical criticism coming out of the West in the eighties was the result of an interested desire to conserve the subject of the West, or the West as subject." This quote, which paraphrases Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak," provides a poignant starting point to understand how Western-centric notions of the subject were being challenged during this time. Subaltern studies in specific begun to gain more scholarly attention, and Antonio Gramsci's conceptualization of subalternity became an initial entry point into the topic. According to Green, Gramsci identified "slaves, peasants, religious groups, women, different races, and the proletariat as subaltern social groups." While this conception of subalternity assigns a blanket term to understudied subjectivities, in 1988 Spivak complicates Gramsci's notion of subalternity

by defining "subaltern" in terms of colonized subjects, specifically in India. Despite Spivak's cooption of the term "subaltern," Green's essay ultimately offers a critique of Spivak's reading of Gramsci as being fundamentally ahistorical and thus misunderstanding Gramsci's original conception of subalternity. According to Green, Gramsci's use of subalternity is more holistic, being connected to both the potential for liberatory transformation and the inability of subaltern subjectivities to move past their hegemonic oppression. As Green states, "Gramsci's study of the subaltern reveals not only the difficulties involved in subaltern analysis but also the many factors that contribute to group marginalization and the elements which prevent groups from overcoming their marginalization." Based on Green's reading, Spivak's diversion from Gramsci's conception of subalternity is significant, but it is in service of interrogating the failure of a Westernized perspective to truly understand a form of subalternity that is always implicated in race-based oppression, not just class-based oppression.

Despite critiques of her misreadings of Gramsci, Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" remains one of the most impactful essays in the cultural studies canon. Spivak's essay problematizes these Western and traditional Marxist notions of the working-class subject through her theorization the subaltern or "third-world" subjectivity. In 1988, when the essay was published, Spivak was an Andrew T. Mellon Professor at the University of Pittsburgh. She founded and was the first director of the graduate program for cultural studies at the University of Pittsburgh in the late 1980s. 54 The first iteration of the essay was published in the journal Wedge in 1985 with the title "Can the Subaltern Speak: Speculations on Widow Sacrifice" but was then published in its current form in the edited collection Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture previously discussed in this essay. Spivak's essay takes to task poststructuralist theory for ignoring "the international division of labor" and poses the seminal question of the essay, "can the subaltern speak?" 55 As one of the foremost postcolonial theorists, Spivak's work continues to spur postcolonial and decolonial scholarship in cultural studies and serves as a constant reminder to cultural studies scholars to question "their own implication in intellectual and economic history." 56

"Can the Subaltern Speak?" opens with a critique of the text "Intellectuals and Power: A Conversation between Michel Foucault and Giles Deleuze." While this friendly conversation about the poststructuralist implications of Marxist thought shows that the structures of "power / desire / and interest" should not be reduced to a coherent narrative, according to Spivak, Foucault and Deleuze "systematically ignore the question of ideology and their own implication in intellectual and economic history." 57 Spivak uses this conversation between the two theorists to discuss the Western-centric notions of the working-class subject and the inherent individual sovereignty afforded to this Westernized subject. Based on this conversation, Foucault and Deleuze err in approaching the Subaltern from an essentialized viewpoint of a still-sovereign subject. Spivak's piece makes salient that by ignoring the international division of labor, Foucault and Deleuze are conceptualizing the subaltern as being on equal footing with a Western, proletariat subjectivity rather than recognizing the subaltern as a uniquely disenfranchised group that does not have an inherent liberatory potential. By subsuming the entire subaltern subjectivity under the same rules and conditions of the disenfranchised Western proletariat, Foucault and Deleuze are indeed guaranteeing that the subaltern cannot speak if it is only ever constituted through a Westernized perspective of white-washed oppression.

Minu Vettamala, in her cogent summary of "Can the Subaltern Speak," notes, "Spivak argues that, surprisingly for these figures, when Foucault and Deleuze talk about oppressed groups such as the working classes, they fall back into precisely these uncritical

notions of 'sovereign subjects' by restoring to them a fully centered consciousness." 58 In other words, the Western working-class subject is inherently imbued with some ability to rise above their economic and social constraints to participate in political discourse: "through alliance politics, [the Western subject] can speak and know their conditions." 59 However, the subaltern subject is not granted those same affordances.

Embedded within Spivak's conceptualization of the subaltern subject is the unearthing of the colonial commitments present in Western notions of subjectivity, and especially in the ever-present construction of the subaltern subject as Other. Despite the greatest efforts of first-world intellectuals to emancipate or "give a voice" to the subaltern subject, Spivak argues that these attempts are always premised on the project of "recognition' of the Third World through 'assimilation.'" Spivak turns to psychoanalytic theory to conceptualize the subaltern subject without assuming a colonial disposition, and specifically highlight's Derrida's work as having "a long-term usefulness for people outside the First World." For Spivak, Derrida's displacement of the European, ethnocentric subject works to dislodge the subaltern subject from being constituted within the Western working-class subject. This is a project of de-assimilation within which the subaltern subject's radical voicelessness can be recognized apart from the Western working-class subject's claims to individual agency.

Spivak's ultimate conclusion in the essay is that "the subaltern cannot speak." She offers an anecdote in the last section of her essay in which serves to make salient the voicelessness of the subaltern subject in political discourse. The anecdote is about a young Indian girl, Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri, who committed suicide in North Calcutta in 1926. Though she committed suicide in act of political protest, her suicide was recoded, even by her family, as "a case of illicit love." Even the ultimate sacrifice of her own life for a political cause was not enough to allow the subaltern woman to be heard. According to Vettamala, Spivak "tells the story of Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri's suicide not as an example of the Indian woman's inability to speak within Western discourse, but to show that Indian discourse has been so battered by the storms of (colonial) history that it, too, offers no resources for successful communication." Thus, Spivak's essay shows that the roots of colonialism are so deeply embedded into the subaltern subject that the subject is unknowable and unable to speak even to itself.

Subalternity's Lasting Impact

It is difficult to begin to measure the impact of "Can the Subaltern Speak" on the intellectual history of the humanities. The essay has been cited over two thousand times, and countless journal articles have incorporated "Can the Subaltern Speak" into their titles. Though the essay applies to a variety of disciplines and intellectual lineages, its relevance for cultural studies cannot be overstated. Cultural studies continues to be heavily influenced by Marxist critiques. Spivak's essay provides a new lens to view Marxism by asserting that there are certain subjectivities (the subaltern specifically) that are being ignored through traditional Marxist critique. This essay forces cultural studies scholars to reassess their commitments to Western notions of culture and subjectivity and instead recognize that they may be always already constituting the subaltern as Other through their invocation of traditional Marxism. Her essay also complicates the narrative that Western academics have the propensity to "emancipate" subaltern Others through trying to give them a "voice" by studying their cultural practices. Instead, this kind of work only succeeds in recognition of the subaltern through assimilating them into a Western context of understanding.

Despite this shift in cultural studies towards a decentering of the Western subject, Western notions of prosperity and equality reigned supreme in an American economic

context, leaving little room for Westerners outside of the academy to sympathize with subaltern subjectivities. In 1988, the ideals of Reaganism were still very much at the center of political thought in the United States. According to Hutchinson, Reaganism represented the "New Right," or a brand of conservatism that "proposed the removal of state intervention from a free market, and the gradual dismantling of the public sector." The rise of Reaganism coincided with an "internationalization of capital flows" and a shifting of the American labor force from "being predominantly male, white, full-time, skilled, unionized and based in the manufacturing sector" to an increasingly "mixed-sex, multi-racial . . . part-time or short-term and non-unionized" workforce. Though Reaganism was not heavily studied by cultural studies scholars, Thatcherism, a politically similar movement to Reaganism in the United Kingdom, became a main topic of inquiry for British cultural studies scholars.

Contextualizing Thatcherism

"Thatcherism," defined by the *Routledge Dictionary of Economics* as "an attitude of frugality towards public expenditure and a belief in the supremacy of market forces," draws its name from Margaret Thatcher's time as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1979 to 1990. 66 As the first woman to hold the office, she notoriously placed a heavy emphasis on monetary control, the privatization of nationalized industries, and the removal of labor market stringencies. Officially outlined during her cabinet's first budget speech in 1979, the program of that would come to be known as "Thatcherism" was founded on four principles: the strengthening of economic incentives, the reduction of the burden of financing the public sector, the reduction in the role of the state to increase freedom of individual choice, and increased responsibility in collective bargaining.

The year 1988 marked the halfway point of Thatcher's third term as Prime Minister, in which she had finally achieved dominance within the Conservative Party after two successive and spectacular election successes. The United Kingdom's economy was prospering, spearheaded by chancellor of the exchequer Nigel Lawson's economic reform. Living standards were steadily increasing for most of the year, certainly until the great stock exchange crash of October 1988. As Eric Evans points out in *Thatcher and Thatcherism*, no party had sustained its majority over three successive general elections since 1945, which allowed Thatcher the "unprecedented authority that she clearly intended to use to achieve her vision of change." Reshuffling her cabinet to consolidate her power, she would acerbically reflect on the period as "the single most devastating defeat ever inflicted upon democratic socialism in Britain."

Additionally, Thatcher's third term would be remembered for her restructuring of taxation. Introduced in March of 1988, the cabinet announced an income tax structure comprised of only two rates: a standard rate of 25 percent and a higher rate of 40 percent. The prospect of reduced taxation allowed the Conservatives to present themselves as the party of low taxation during the 1987 election. Furthermore, the Trade Union and Employment Acts of 1988, which allowed individuals greater autonomy and legal rights when working for a union, endeared the working classes to the Conservative Party. Thatcher's reign would come to be supported by constituents who had never voted for the Conservative Party before. Appealing to the working classes' aspirations for self-improvement in both rhetoric and policy, Thatcher expanded the service sector (and by extension, the middle class), which historically harbors Conservative sympathies, at the expense of manual labor. 69 However, whereas Thatcher's policies and populist rhetoric helped her gain working-class voters, she alienated many of the highly educated middle classes.

1988-Defining Publication: The Hard Road to Renewal

In *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left* (1988), Stuart Hall collects some of his key articles written between 1978 and 1988 (first published in books and journals such as *Marxism Today* and *The New Socialist*), in an effort to "define the character and significance of the political project of "Thatcherism" and the crisis of the left which it has precipitated." Writing in 1988, Hall tackled Thatcherism at its arguable peak. His book voiced the severe critiques of Thatcherism articulated by much of the British leftist intelligentsia, though, as Evans underlines, "rarely in the kind of newspapers that Thatcher's new supporters read." Ironically, or possibly in retribution, the university funding system was radically reformed in 1988. Implored to cut costs and seek external funding, universities' endowments shrunk up to 25 percent in the following decade. 72

Conceived as a series of interventions against the political climate of its day, the book's essays are presented in four distinct parts. The essays in Part One focus on the analysis of Thatcherism, whereas those in Part Three concentrate on what Hall recognizes as "the crisis of the left." These two narrative threads are connected via Part Two, which explicates a wider set of concerns and histories. Finally, Part Four provides both a conclusion regarding the state of the left, and concrete recommendations for its renewal.

Hall posits the ideology of Thatcherism as a perversion of quintessential concepts of "Englishness," creating "new discursive articulations" between liberal discourses and the conservative themes of "tradition, family and nation, respectability, patriarchalism and order." Culturally, Thatcherism is defined as a form of "regressive modernization"—"the attempt to 'educate' and discipline the society into a particularly regressive version of modernity." Hall explains his decade-long focus on politics and ideology as a deliberate strategy, chosen to formulate "a theoretical and political language on the left which rigorously avoids the temptations to economism, reductionism or teleological forms of argument." Consequently, many of the collected essays attempt to achieve a deeper understanding of Thatcherism's populist rhetoric. Hall recognizes a contradictory and overdetermined connection "between Thatcherism's strategic interventions in popular life, the reactionary character of its social project, and its directive and disciplinary exercise of state power," which he terms "authoritarian populism."

Hall's explication of class struggles was greatly influenced by the work of Gramsci, as Gramsci understood the importance of determinants other than economic conditions of production and acknowledged how the dominant classes reach across society to forge hegemonic relationships. As Owen Worth explains in "Stuart Hall, Marxism without Guarantees, and 'The Hard Road to Renewal,'" Hall's Gramscian approach "looked to widen the manner in which Marxism had dealt with aspects of social agency such as the nation, popular culture, forms of beliefs and religion" 78—all of which were employed by the ruling classes in an effort to win the "hearts and minds" of the general public. 79

Indeed, it would be folly to read Hall's 1988 collection without acknowledging the importance of his article "The Problem of Ideology: Marxism without Guarantees." In this article, Hall sets out beyond the traditionally deterministic boundaries of Marxist analysis to allow for the aforementioned articulation of popular culture "so crucial for the advancement of Cultural Studies as a distinct discipline." By positing hegemony as an open-ended process in which dominant classes constantly seek to maintain their influence, Hall employed the Gramscian idea that class formation is fluidly constructed across every level of society. Disallowing the titular "guarantees" to be made regarding the positioning of social practices, Hall underlines how forms of agency shape these practices in different, contrasting, and contradictory ways. Applications is the sum of the s

guarantees thus should be understood as the "necessary openness of historical development to practice and struggle." B3 Thatcherism, then, can be understood as a hegemonic project which employs "authoritarian populism" to simultaneously charm and divide Great Britain during large parts of the 1980s. $\frac{84}{2}$

Whereas Hall writes a contemptuous critique of Thatcherism, he nevertheless does not allow the left to remain unscathed. Hall underlines the damage caused by "Labour's failure to establish itself as a leading cultural force in civil society, popular culture and urban life," as it allowed for the rise of the force of Thatcherism which is "capable in this historical moment of unhingeing it from below." 85 Hall considers the left's renewal as contingent upon a qualitative change in politics, aimed at developing a counter-hegemonic strategy intended to redefine "what the whole project of socialism now means." 86 Turning his back on "the spurious oscillations of optimism and pessimism, or the triumphalism which so often pass for thought on the traditional left," Hall pleads for a concrete and strategic commitment of the left to the construction of a new political will.

Importantly, Hall does not consider his recommendations for the renewal of the left a fixed program, to be mechanically implemented through the formal bureaucracies of the left. Instead, he sees his proposals as explicating some of the key questions for what we might call the "agenda of renewal," which allows the left renewal "by precisely occupying the same world that Thatcherism does, and building from that a different form of society." Be Importantly, Hall holds the left culpable for failing to understand how "consumer capitalism" generates popularity in the minds of the mass of ordinary people, as this was one of the foundational building blocks of Thatcherism. To contest Thatcherism, Hall argues that "we must first attend 'violently' to things as they are, without illusions or false hopes, if we are to transcend the present." The renewal of the left requires the positing of a viable alternative to Thatcherism and dealing with the realities of the era.

Conclusion

Although fissures in the disciplinary underpinnings of cultural studies were becoming more readily apparent, 1988 was a year of productive growth that challenged core components of cultural studies in important ways. The various "crises" that the discipline experienced in the late 1980s signified a stretching of cultural studies beyond its starkly Marxist and Western roots. The "crisis in Marxism" allowed for Marxist critique to be reinterpreted not as a stable, fixed set of ideologies, but as a theoretical framework with implications for a vast array of subjectivities and discourses of power beyond class struggles. Similarly, the "crisis of the Left" forced cultural studies scholars to grapple with issues of social hegemony and to imagine new avenues of resistance in the face of a militantly conservative Western world. The challenges and growth that cultural studies experienced in 1988 still mark a defining moment in the discipline's history.

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Review of Farm Worker Futurism: Speculative Technologies of Resistance by Curtis Marez (University of Minnesota Press)

lewis levenberg

ABSTRACT In this focused visual-cultural history of farm work in California over the course of the twentieth century, Curtis Marez draws on a materialist and critical approach to understand the representations, in various media and formats, of farm workers, and of the activist movements that they have championed. Marez frames analyses of cultural artifacts, including speculative and science-fiction books and films, documentaries, propaganda, and studio artworks, in the historical and material conditions of those farm workers' movements. Throughout, he foregrounds the people who shaped modern labor movements, from the vineyards of the San Fernando and San Joaquin Valleys and beyond. Marez argues that competing material interests, socio-technical mediations, and historical conditions—the animating conflicts of this account, between agribusiness and farm laborers—have shaped broader expressions of "americanism", imagined futures, and visual cultures across North American societies, through the very contradictions that animate and constitute them

Farm Worker Futurism: Speculative Technologies of Resistance. By Curtis Marez. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2016, 211 pp. (paperback) ISBN 978-0-8166-9745-8. US List: \$25.00.

In this focused visual-cultural history of farm work in California over the course of the twentieth century, Curtis Marez introduces "speculative history" to his examination of "migrant labor techno-culture[s] of time-space compression." (50) These high-flying conceptual interventions draw on a fundamentally materialist and critical approach to understand the representations, in various media and formats, of farm workers, and of the activist movements that they have championed. Marez frames analyses of cultural artifacts, including speculative and science-fiction books and films, documentaries, propaganda, and studio artworks, in the historical and material conditions of those farm workers' movements. Throughout, he foregrounds the *people* who shaped modern labor movements, from the vineyards of the San Fernando and San Joaquin Valleys and beyond. Marez argues that competing material interests, socio-technical mediations, and historical conditions—the animating conflicts of this account, between agribusiness and farm laborers—have shaped broader expressions of "americanism" (104), imagined futures, and visual cultures across North American societies, through the very contradictions that animate and constitute them.

This leads to a core claim of the book: that futurity, as imagined by labor movements throughout and beyond twentieth-century Californian agricultural work, is both *critical* and conservative at once. (10) The argument proves both strong and subtle. Its import is clearest where Marez overlays archival analyses of specific artifacts and collections with corresponding interactions between people and events in linear, observable historical moments such as strikes. This specificity, in turn, supports the broader periodic themes

that Marez introduces in each chapter, by articulating the labor movements' structures and ideals in the context of their representation, especially their visual representations. In each chapter, he compellingly contrasts farm workers' imaginative futurity, of a world of open possibilities, with the prescriptive futurism exemplified by proto-fascist agribusinesses, from as early as the late nineteenth century, to its corresponding expression in the Silicon Valley tech bubble's treatment of its blue-collar workers in the early twenty-first. (11)

Early on in the text, Marez shows how agricultural technologies have been repeatedly and consciously *weaponized* by farm owners and corporate interests, stretching back at least to the 1800s on the West Coast of the US. His examples include specific uses of factories, tractors, robots, pesticides, and the short-handled hoe wielded by braceros. They include cases of both deliberate attacks, and of instrumental negligence, always in pursuit of control of the people and organizations on whose labor the agricultural economy relies. Further, though, Marez compellingly argues that the "exploitation of farm workers depends on technologically mediated forms of visual culture." (80) To support this claim, he provides rich examples of the visual representation of "stoop labor" in science fiction and in early agribusiness and union media, emphasizing how the top-down and wide-angle visual fields correspond to owners' perspectives, whereas bottom-up views or close-ups of workers reinforce the human scale of labor.

As he introduces threads of argumentation that will carry throughout the book, Marez also marks the conceptual dichotomies to which he will continually return. Farm labor plays the critical role in producing exploited profit for agribusiness, but is simultaneously erased by those businesses' visual and cultural productions. Unionization impacts farm workers from the start, and has a rich, proud history that spans ethnic, national, and industrial lines—but the same labor unions (after an initial catastrophic failure on the part of the United Cannery Workers' strike in the early 1900s) explicitly rejected communism as a guiding ideology. And unions' deeply held "Americanness," set against the simultaneous "foreignness" of farm laborers' images, leads to unions expressing complex, and sometimes internally contradictory, ideals of work, liberty, and future society. As Marez shows throughout the work, representation of farm workers tends to draw on imagery and concepts of class, race, sexuality, and technology, in addition to those of agricultural labor as such.

That conflict of ideals carries through the post-World War II period, in which farm laborers organized more actively than they had before, especially against the promotion of rapid, dehumanizing automation. Marez identifies "corporate control of visual technologies" on the rise in this period, through which an agribusiness gaze exemplified media representations of farm workers. (77) These linked, systemic drives towards domination had particularly strong roots in visual and rhetorical imagery of whiteness, masculinity, and heteronormativity. A paradigmatic romanticization of small family farms (especially white nuclear families) is reflected not just in corporate propaganda but also in science fiction of the time, effacing the actual work being done to make large agricultural corporations profitable, by Latinx, Asian, Black, and White laborers alike.

But neither narratives of possible futures, nor the appropriation of visual technologies, remains the exclusive domain of business interests. Marez introduces the world-building approach of the United Farm Workers, and the mass appeal of Cesar Chavez's and Dolores Huerta's direct actions, as ideologically and iconographically rooted in earlier groups, like the National Farm Laborers Union led by Ernesto Galarza. Union propaganda films such as *Poverty in the Valley of Plenty, Fighting for our Lives*, or the *Wrath of Grapes* exposed, through direct visual representation, both the conditions of labor in California's agricultural industry, and the development of what Marez terms "farm fascism." Successes

for progressive politics in this field, such as these media, strikes, and fasts, were tempered by Cold War "Americanist" anticommunism, and by strong Catholic traditions among farm workers. Marez does not flinch from describing the "contradictory consequences of the UFW's efforts to critically analyze and intervene in just such an agribusiness-dominated visual field" as mass media. (83) Those consequences include the expression of a patriotic imagined future, steeped in progressive ideals, but rooted in selective traditions contemporaneous to the Cold War, the farm workers' movement, and coincident articulations of patriotism.

This constitutive contradiction carries through the book's later chapters. It informs Marez's observations on how speculative culture has interacted with farm worker art movements through the late twentieth century. In perhaps the most memorable analysis in the book, Marez locates Star Wars's operatic origins in the struggles of workers against large corporate interests in the 20th century Californian agricultural economy. Marez also details the racialized visual vernacular of the saga, by noting that the agrarian populism of the movies comes by way of the "animating absence" of migrant laborers. He makes the curious claim that Darth Vader represents Cesar Chavez, for Lucas—a claim backed by close attention to those racialized visual cues, and to the strength/weakness paradox applied by anti-union propaganda to Chavez, but ignoring the role that Vader plays as the enforcer of a hegemonic, oppressive government, precisely in opposition to a popular movement. In this way, says Marez, "the history of pre-digital race and labor formations continues to influence contemporary culture, starting with Lucas's own digital filmmaking," and culminating in the transformation undergone by Lucas himself, "from rebellious farm boy to the head of a vast corporate empire." (135-41) Marez sets this telling of conservative, nativist, corporatization against examples of populist and resistant artwork by Ester Hernandez. The close readings of her calaveras, images of Huerta, and especially her famous Sun Mad poster design, provide the avenue into Marez's critique of a consistent undercurrent, in the late twentieth century, of corporate visual media to subsume both agrarian workers' visual representations, and their material conditions of labor.

Those patterns of corporate subsumption of visual media extend through the early twenty-first century, as Marez argues in the afterword. Ideology and visual technique such as "family farm" or "artisanal" iconography and branding—are deployed by large corporate entities precisely in order to co-opt reactionary, racialized mediations of white populism. (134) But Marez also shows how the "legacies of the historical farm worker movement" extend "beyond the fields, in the context of new labor systems and new labor movements," to influence not only 21st century speculative fiction, but also Silicon Valley labor movements. Tracing this legacy through examples of speculative and science-fiction works about labor, empire, movement, and natural resources, Marez identifies common themes of individualism, ethics, and humanism, as set against corporate homogeneity, instrumental rationality, and technocracies. (110) He then homes in on the material gains of contemporary labor organizations born from earlier farm workers' movements, showing how mobile phone usage in immigrants' rights protests mirrors the distributed communications strategies of earlier huelgas. He delves into the questions of labor and exploitation at the heart of Silicon Valley, including those surrounding computer hardware production, the successful janitors' strike against Apple, and the ongoing organization of IT workers. In the final pages, futurity as imagined by agricultural and post-agricultural workers' movements re-emerges as a potential space of resolution of perpetual struggles: between labor and capital, between tradition and progress, between one path of progress and another. In this way, Marez concludes with a clear example of his concept of "speculative history," adding poetic flourish to his trenchant analyses.

Throughout this volume, Marez demonstrates with fluent confidence how one holds a contradiction in the mind. The reader benefits immensely from Marez's ability to patiently and honestly examine apparent paradoxes—and to extricate nuanced and delicate truths from that approach. Occasionally, such as in the reading of Vader as Chavez, Marez reaches a touch too far, showcasing his talent for evocative juxtaposition when it cuts free of the gravity of his critical analysis. Even in these situations, the book's prose remains clear and precise, and the reader never loses sight of the relevant concepts, artifacts, people, or events in question. This is especially apparent in the book's recurring argument, that futures imagined by farm worker movements have consistently held both critical and conservative ideals at the same time. In plumbing this complex concept's rationales and contexts, Marez articulates a novel critical intervention with careful archival work. He shows that the workers whose movements he studies have not consolidated around a simplistic, unified identity. Rather, these workers have developed a fragmentation of subalternities, each with its own means and style of self-representation. From myriad media and historical records, produced by and about a multifaceted, often-conflicting cacophany of workers' voices—each clamoring for attention, and fighting off the silences imposed by agribusiness' interests—Marez has deftly underscored the harmonies that resonate across modern and contemporary labor movements, marching towards an uncertain, often dangerous future without losing hope.



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Andrew J Wood, "Review of 'The Composition of Movements to Come: Aesthetics and Cultural Labor After the Avant-Garde' by Stevphen Shukaitis (Rowman & Littlefield International)," *Lateral 8.2* (2019).

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Book Reviews Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019)

Review of *The Composition of Movements* to Come: Aesthetics and Cultural Labor After the Avant-Garde by Stevphen Shukaitis (Rowman & Littlefield International)

Andrew J Wood

ABSTRACT Stevphen Shukaitis has produced an interesting text by situating a strategic conversation between artistic avant-gardes and autonomist political movements. He begins with a plea for rethinking strategy, and not just questions of tactics, in seeking radical aesthetic and sociopolitical change.

The Composition of Movements to Come: Aesthetics and Cultural Labor After the Avant-Garde. By Stevphen Shukaitis. London, U.K.: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2016, 176 pp. (paperback). ISBN 978-1-78348-173-6.

Stevphen Shukaitis has produced an interesting text by situating a strategic conversation between artistic avant-gardes and autonomist political movements. He begins with a plea for rethinking strategy, and not just questions of tactics, in seeking radical aesthetic and socio-political change. How may radical artists and radical political actors learn from each other in terms of strategy? For instance, what can the latter learn from the example of Dada, not as an aesthetic choice but as a conscious (and collective) set of strategic options for political change? It is through this strategic lens that he turns to examples ranging from the Situationists to contemporaneous musicians. Yet the framing is not to think politics aesthetically (nor aesthetics politically) in a generalizable way, but rather to see specific intersections between the strategic predispositions towards rupture in radical movements that engage both register (6–10).

Strategy, Shukaitis argues, must first and foremost anticipate, prepare for, and counteract the myriad ways in which the state-capital system works to find and exploit "new forms of subversion so that their energies may be rendered into new mechanisms for capital accumulation and governance." (147) Shukaitis doesn't completely flesh out arguments supporting this claim—it is simply taken as a given—as it likely is assumed by most readers. Importantly, however, he doesn't bemoan this co-opting ability of capital, but instead argues for shifts in strategy that can successfully subvert capital's all-encompassing ambitions through cultural and political productions that defy such co-optation through their unintelligibility. The most central of these strategies discussed here are overidentification and work refusal.

Over-identification is, for Shukaitis, a strategy of hiding in plain sight by so overtly identifying with key aesthetic aspects of their opposition. He presents Slovenian art/musical group Laibach (and the broader Neue Slowenische Kunst anti-state) as an

exemplar of over-identification. Laibach pushes proto-fascist aesthetic choices so far as to render them absurd. Beyond this, Laibach also holds up a critical mirror to a society they seem to be desperately warning about the dangers of the very displays they articulate. In other words, their music (and accompanying videos) utilize fascist imagery as a way to (through playful enjoyment) undermine fascism itself, but also to reveal the intersections between fascist tendencies and consumption of cultural commodities. Shukaitis's handling of Laibach as an example of over-identification is reminiscent of Slavoj Žižek's discussion of Rammstein's performances as an avenue toward libidinal enjoyment of fascist pleasures divorced from their dangerous ideology and political platform. Fascism is effectively undermined from within, or so Žižek and Shukaitis claim, and neutered through this very process of celebrating its aesthetic appeal while rejecting its violence and ethno-nationalism. Yet, a crucial question is largely ignored; what happens if the performative over-identification is actually mobilized by fascists themselves? The intentionality of the artist(s) or other subversives would hardly matter in the face of their work being utilized by the very reactionary ideologues they are over-identifying with in order to undermine. What, in other words, happens if the "over" aspect of overidentification isn't adequately legible, and the performance, work, or idea is simply taken as fascist identifying? In a text on radical potentiality, shouldn't we also look for reactionary potentialities as well? The problematic intentionality raised then points us towards what Laibach may have meant rather than what audiences may have made of them. Intentionality has very little place in Shukaitis's other key discussion, however, on the strategy of work refusal as sabotage.

Work refusal has long been discussed as a radical tactic, usually in terms of stoppages and strikes, but Shukaitis posits that it should also be rethought. This is especially prescient in our contemporary moment, defined by a "new spirit of capitalism" (a phrase he borrows from Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello) and the emergence of the so-called creative industries (and hence the declaration of the "creative class" as a new type of worker). So much of the global economy is driven by *creative* labor, and the ways in which rents and value can be extracted from said labor. The arts, he argues, have been variously complicit and critical of the movement towards this "new spirit," seen most strikingly in the simultaneous societal declarations that "everyone is an artist" and the insistence that everyone also be a worker. This is most especially the case, Shukaitis argues, in our contemporary moment of big data and social media, in which even our leisure activities are largely monitored and monetized.

The (im)possibility of rest for the artist (and one could perhaps also include the radical activist in this category) is a perplexing notion—and is likely to inspire further debate, perhaps most of all with theorists who follow Georges Bataille, Gilles Deleuze, or even Michel Foucault as thinkers celebrating the sovereignty, freedom, or resistance supposedly found in aesthetics. Central to so many of these claims is the separation of art from productive processes (that is, commodity-producing activity), claims that go back at least as far as Romanticism. Is this sovereignty threatened when leisure is—by and large productive? Are we too attached to the work/leisure binary to imagine other realms of human activity? Are there not intersections between work and labor that make such a binary unsustainable? These are central questions that Shukaitis does not necessarily answer so much as pose for the erudite reader already deeply engaged in such theoretical lines of inquiry. More so, what Shukaitis argues is that such questions often elide important potential that strategies can have by accepting the frame of the debate in a capital-centric paradigm. Those working in either the avant-garde or the autonomist traditions are unlikely to discover much new about those singular areas of expertise, per se, but should find value in the conversation Shukaitis brings forth between them. Those with an interest in additional cultural outlets, such as punk or jazz (both are briefly

mentioned), hip hop, graffiti, or no wave cinema, may find applications for Shukaitis's work in their scenes and studies. But to judge this text based on use value seems to entirely miss Shukaitis's point.



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Book Reviews Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019)

Review of *Premonitions: Selected Essays on the Culture of Revolt* by AK Thompson (AK Press)

Kate Siegfried

ABSTRACT In this series of essays written over the last decade, AK Thompson offers a critical assessment of the analytical foundation underwriting contemporary social movement politics. Methodologically and conceptually influenced by Walter Benjamin, Thompson looks to visual culture, everyday life, and collective street actions as crystallizations of the logics saturating our culture of revolt. Through generative critique, creative conceptual development, and a consistent orientation toward identifying politically possibility, Premonitions lays the groundwork for social movement scholars and activists alike to develop a conceptual toolkit for moving beyond the mere existence of struggle as an end in itself.

Premonitions: Selected Essays on the Culture of Revolt. By AK Thompson. Chico, CA: AK Press, 2018, 254 pp. (paperback) ISBN 9781849353380. US List: \$20.00.

Within the first few pages of Premonitions: Selected Essays on the Culture of Revolt, AK Thompson describes not wanting to feel "at peace with or reconciled to a reality that debased us all." (2) This is a feeling likely shared by those who seek to fundamentally transform our current social reality. Indeed, to feel "at peace" or settled within our current violent social formation would be to accept it as is. A premonition is a strong feeling that something bad is about to happen. Although never explicitly articulated, it seems that Thompson offers the premonition not only as a sensation that merely happens to someone, but rather, as a mode of engagement through which one can identify political possibility and shake off the feeling of being "at peace." Premonition as a mode of engagement forces an active reckoning with the violent and exploitative future that will come to pass if present conditions are left unchanged. Importantly, Thompson does not simply uncover this dismal future, the logical conclusion of our current social reality, as an intellectual end in itself. Rather, his political method throughout this series of essays is to identify and highlight possibilities for antagonism and opportunity across different terrains of social struggle, including cultural production, everyday life, and collective street action. While numerous threads weave their way through the entirety of the book, Premonitions is divided into three sections: "catastrophe," "the critical moment," and "progress." The three sections are thematically distinct, yet Thompson's consistent political investment holds the text together. While he moves across a diverse array of topics, he does so with a diligent attentiveness to identifying and developing political opportunity from different facets of social life.

Extracted from Walter Benjamin, Thompson's methodological approach is one which isolates single objects as encapsulations of the social totality from which they emerged. Or, put more simply, Thompson locates the whole within the fragment. For Thompson, this methodological approach enables a collective grasp of specific movement shortcomings,

thus enabling a sober assessment of how to recognize and take hold of political possibility. Importantly, Benjamin's presence is woven throughout the book, beginning with the title. *Premonitions* can almost certainly be understood in relation to two of Benjamin's most important texts, titled *Illuminations* and *Reflections*. While the acts of illumination and reflection are methodologically present in *Premonitions* as Thompson turns a critical eye to past social movement activities, Thompson's approach is distinct from Benjamin in so far as he actively attunes the reader to future time through the predictive sensation of the premonition. This intentional orientation toward the future remained somewhat more implicit, although not absent, in Benjamin's writings, as he generally turned explicitly toward the past as a primary force for revolutionary transformation.

The first section of the book, "catastrophe," includes four essays that analyze and identify "missed opportunities." One key animating question in this section (which appears again at smaller moments in subsequent sections) is what role violence should play in social movements. While the debate over violence continues to return time and time again, especially in the context of "diversity of tactics" Thompson makes an important intervention. He states that

while activists on both sides of the violence/nonviolence divide seem committed to their respective certainties, few would suggest that either position has brought us any closer to a collective understanding of what we must do to win. (18)

Instead of settling on "diversity of tactics" as the inclusive answer to this debate, Thompson breaks the conversation open by returning to Benjamin's "Critique of Violence," highlighting the delineation between law-preserving violence and violence which establishes a new legal framework. This pivots away from arguments predicated on measuring violence through a logic of harm, and instead, the measure of violence becomes "the degree to which the status quo is maintained or transformed." (19) As Thompson points out, by maintaining arguments predicated on the logic of measuring harm, deliberation and assessment of movement tactics are highly constrained. Instead of orienting toward the question of what it takes to win, which would, in turn, break open logics of capture, activists often replay the same arguments over and over. Thompson states, "...I can't shake the feeling that we've reached a point of intractability that makes learning new things impossible. We've already chosen sides. And what we want most is the fight." (21)

The second section, "the critical moment," turns to visual culture as key objects through which to index political possibility. Thompson's key contribution in this section is his demonstration of the utility of Benjamin's theorization of "wish images" and "dialectical images" for assessing the role of visual culture in social movements. As Thompson details, "wish images," are images that ignite a longing for an unrealized promise by harkening back to traces of a (mythic) past. Indeed, Thompson's argument throughout this section, as demonstrated through an analysis of anti-globalization art, is that within movement contexts wish images "signal the possibility that the human energies captured by capitalism might finally spill over and bring with them a moment of transformative intoxication" without substantively gesturing toward how this transformation will take place as a productive process. (91) Importantly, Thompson's argument is not that movements are merely drawn to wish images, but that wish images function as a structuring logic for political engagement. Here, the image of resistance and the accompanying intoxication becomes the end in itself, rather than strategic engagement rooted in a real assessment of existing conditions and what it takes to win. Instead, Thompson suggests we turn to Benjamin's "dialectical image," or images that simultaneously make visible "the promise of finally fulfilling the desire for happiness and

the *means* by which that fulfillment might be achieved," as a tool for prompting the viewer to reckon with the gap between an unrealized wish and conditions as they actually are. (134) Offering Diego Rivera's *Man at the Crossroads* (1933) and Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) as concrete crystallizations of the dialectical image, Thompson argues for the dialectical image as a useful reference point for those seeking to illuminate and make vulnerable the violent structures embedded in our society.

In the final section, "progress," Thompson attends to the analytical foundation of different forms of collective action, including occupation and black bloc tactics. While this section is less conceptually cohesive than prior sections, key themes (such as the question of violence or the wish image) reemerge as full-fledged tools for social analysis, while also leaving room for Thompson to make a series of creative and generative claims. These claims include understanding violence as a productive force as well as understanding the struggle for the urban commons as a battle for necropolis, or, that the living must forge an alliance with the dead in order to win. This final section performs the creative and imaginative thinking necessary for collectively solving social problems.

Thompson identifies his audience clearly in the introduction as "comrades who inhabit the radical scene's structure of feeling without misgiving." (3) While Thompson, at times, offers harsh critiques of these radical political spaces, he does not leave his imagined readers hanging out to dry. Rather, through generative critique, creative conceptual development, and a consistent orientation toward identifying politically possibility, Thompson generates the sense of a shared and ongoing political project. *Premonitions* lays the groundwork for social movement scholars and activists alike to develop a conceptual toolkit for moving beyond the mere existence of struggle as an end in itself.

å Bio

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Jared M Wright, "Review of 'The Cultural Production of Intellectual Property Rights: Law, Labor, and the Persistence of Primitive Accumulation' by Sean Johnson Andrews (Temple University Press)," *Lateral 8.2* (2019).

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Book Reviews Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019)

Review of *The Cultural Production of Intellectual Property Rights: Law, Labor, and the Persistence of Primitive Accumulation*by Sean Johnson Andrews (Temple University Press)

Jared M Wright

ABSTRACT Sean Johnson Andrews' new book is a timely critique of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) from a critical Marxist perspective. But the true goal of this work goes much deeper into tracing the history of the cultural foundations of the liberal state, private property laws, and labor relations, or what he calls the "reified culture of property." Regarding the latter, Andrews argues that IPR are only the latest manifestation of this culture. It is an invention functioning like a bandage to hold together the privileged status and power of the capitalist property-owning elite, a power inevitably hemorrhaged by the twin processes of digitization and globalization. In fact, the very existence of IPR, he contends, exposes the fundamental flaws of neoliberal capitalism, presenting us with a unique opportunity. Starting with an examination of IPR, he works backwards to critically interrogate the ideology developed around problematic notions of value creation and the division of labor which both lie at the very heart of the culture of property.

The Cultural Production of Intellectual Property Rights Law, Labor, and the Persistence of Primitive Accumulation. By Sean Johnson Andrews. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2019, 274 pp. ISBN 978-1-4399-1429-8.

On the surface, Sean Johnson Andrews' new book is a timely critique of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) from a critical Marxist perspective. But the true goal of this work goes much deeper into tracing the history of the cultural foundations of the liberal state, private property laws, and labor relations, or what he calls the "reified culture of property." Regarding the latter, Andrews argues that IPR are only the latest manifestation of this culture. It is an invention functioning like a bandage to hold together the privileged status and power of the capitalist property-owning elite, a power inevitably hemorrhaged by the twin processes of digitization and globalization. In fact, the very existence of IPR, he contends, exposes the fundamental flaws of neoliberal capitalism, presenting us with a unique opportunity. Starting with an examination of IPR, he works backwards to interrogate the ideology developed around notions of value creation and the division of labor which both lie at the very heart of the culture of property.

The book opens by positioning the author within the culture of digital piracy in the early 2000s. This is an experience I (and I imagine many others in my generation) could immediately relate to. In those days before streaming services and platforms like YouTube, online file sharing had little to no legal alternatives and provided content not otherwise available, including some significant political content. From Napster to Limewire to BitTorrent, millions of people around the world participated in p2p online file sharing culture, resulting in a certain shifting of values and questioning of the legitimacy of copyright laws and their application to digital content. Like many in this online culture,

Andrews views IPR less as a tool to protect the creativity of entrepreneurs and more as a tool to benefit the wealthy and stymie collective culture.

Andrews goes on to argue how IPR today are essentially an amalgamation of preexisting copyright, trademark, and patent laws designed to extend the hegemonic Western neoliberal capitalist system which values property above all else, even liberty. He cites Chantal Mouffe's "democratic paradox" to illustrate that even though the liberal state ostensibly exists to protect individual liberty, "in the balance between liberty and property, property always wins." (3) Intellectual property is therefore "just another form of private property to be ruthlessly protected by the capital-oriented state," (3) which can allow for no radical alternative to exist. However, the extension of private property rights to the immaterial realm of ideas and culture actually creates an opening for a broader critique of the culture surrounding property, its social valorization, and the role of the state in its protection. (6)

A unique contribution of this book is the way it centers culture in its analysis. The author argues that law itself is a cultural product, thus understanding culture is the key. In Chapter One, he lays out a framework for examining culture at the macro, mezzo, and micro levels. This allows him to show the mediating and synergistic functions of the various levels of culture (e.g. state, media, and individual), through which the culture of property came to be accepted as an unquestioned natural phenomenon in Western societies enshrined in the (neo)liberal state. This contribution alone should be of great interest to scholars of culture.

Chapters Two and Three trace the detailed history of this process of "cultural efficacy," from the Enclosure Movement of the 12^{th} century to the English Civil War in the mid-1600s to the Law and Economics Movement of the 20^{th} century, "to denote the process whereby top-down programs and products gain bottom-up legitimacy." (39) Put simply, many people today believe the free market to be a naturally occurring sacrosanct "bottom-up" phenomenon, but in reality, it was only one of many competing ideologies which happened to win out over others (such as the proto-Marxist "Levellers" in 16^{th} century England) and was protected by the "top-down" coercive force of the liberal state. Describing this history and development of social philosophy and law is where Andrews's keen knowledge truly shines. Even in such extensive historical analyses, he manages to keep the reader engaged and shows relevance to the present day by framing each chapter in relation to contemporary IPR issues.

The author especially focuses on John Locke's defense of private property as a major justification for the Enclosure Movement and foundation of the reified culture of property. Locke reasoned that farmers could privatize land from the "commons" if they improved it (e.g. converting swamp land into productive farm land). Yet, big plantation farms of the day were based on the labor of appropriation through which the owners, not the individual laborers who worked for them, received all credit for improving the land, and hence for creating value. In Chapter Four, the author applies a Marxist critique to this, pointing out how industrial capitalism extended this idea that individual laborers are less important to the production of value than the owners of the means of production. But today's digitized "participatory culture" is undermining this logic by valorizing laborers once again as producers of value. Through platforms like YouTube and Wikipedia, everyone is a creator of content, and thus, value. This forces the central argument of the capitalist economic model into question; how is value produced, distributed, and owned?

Furthermore, Andrews asserts that this type of online distributed peer production in the Western world mirrors the global distribution of labor in world-systems theory. In Chapter Five, he further addresses globalization, arguing that extending IPR to other

countries exposes its limited cultural and historical relevance. Specifically, he analyzes the issue of global copyright piracy, such as local producers selling pirated DVDs in Ecuador or counterfeit blue jeans in Bolivia. Because capitalist production is based on appropriated labor (in this case, from the global South), the foreign (global North) owners claim the value and rewards of the labor of their workers by virtue of owning the brand names. Through such cases, he reveals the hierarchical nature of these labor relations and shows how global piracy can be seen, at least in some cases, as a rebellion against capitalist expropriation of direct producers in the global South.

These final two chapters are particularly strong. IPR show exactly how the ideology of free market and private property fails in modern times because digitization and globalization have produced new means of production and creation of value that do not require ownership or capitalist labor relations. It is an invention created to maintain the property rights of the elite in a world where their ideology is being undermined. Ironically, the more that aspects of culture fall under IPR protection, the more opportunities emerge for piracy, threatening both ownership and the legitimacy of the state protecting these unequal rights. Overall, I found this argument effective, cohesive, and to significantly exceed the critical contributions of other scholarship on IPR. With its big-picture view of the political economy, this work will certainly be of interest to digital sociologists and to those who study IPR, digital rights activism, online piracy, and other related issues.

In addition to this impressive feat of contextualizing IPR in the history of the reified culture of property, the most important contribution of this book is Andrews' engagement with what he calls the "balanced" IPR critics. This includes scholars such as Lawrence Lessig who have led the debate challenging IPR thus far. Lessig was instrumental in establishing the Creative Commons license and his work, such as *Free Culture*, has been a major inspiration for the Digital Rights movement. These scholars criticize the IPR "maximalists" who seek total and complete privatization and market incorporation of all immaterial culture. Yet, as Andrews points out, they largely have challenged IPR without challenging the dogma of the inviolable right of property. They critique the maximalist position while still upholding the reified culture of property by framing intellectual property as technologically unique from material property and thus requiring different rules.

Andrews engages with this debate consistently throughout the book. He asserts that, rather than treating immaterial culture as unique, "there is continuity in the enclosure of both material and immaterial property." (26) Therefore, the same arguments Lessig quite effectively applied to defending immaterial culture from IPR can be pushed even further to expose the fundamental flaws of capitalism. In other words, IPR "maximalists" are challenging the continuum of property from the wrong direction; they need to start closer to the source (i.e. global neoliberal capitalism).

Whether or not you agree with the Marxist view of private property rights, this is certainly the most interesting challenge of Lessig's scholarship I have ever come across, and Andrews makes a valid and effective case. Lessig's contradictory views on property (which Andrews shows in detail) in some ways show how deeply engrained this reified culture of property is. Nevertheless, the author acknowledges that the Free Culture movement has renewed visibility of the social production of value, and calls for an even more comprehensive movement which centralizes people's identity as laborers (class) and thus addresses the fundamental flaws of the culture of property and neoliberal state. In doing so, he argues it would also solve issues of white male supremacy and economic precarity associated with the recent wave of far-right populism and fascism around the world. On the other hand, Andrews is careful to critique moderate "balanced" IPR critics while remaining supportive of the activism it has inspired, avoiding stoking conflicts

between moderate and radical leftists. As a social movement scholar, I appreciate this nuanced approach. My only criticism is that he does not engage more with extant scholarship on social movements addressing IPR. For instance, Gabriella Coleman's *Coding Freedom* and Hector Postigo's *The Digital Rights Movement* both explore the collective resistance happening to IPR at the grassroots level which often goes beyond the moderate, "balanced" perspective the author addresses. Counter-hegemonic culture felt like a missing piece in this picture. Also, as the author acknowledges at the end, there is little attention to the role of intersectional issues including race, gender, and sexuality. The Marxist focus on class above all else can sometimes function to silence other identities, and this lack of solidarity needs to be solved before a movement, the type of which the author proposes, can emerge.



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Stephen Felder, "Review of 'Sensual Excess: Queer Femininity and Brown Jouissance' by Amber Jamilla Musser (NYU Press)," *Lateral 8.2* (2019).

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Book Reviews Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019)

Review of *Sensual Excess: Queer Femininity* and *Brown Jouissance* by Amber Jamilla Musser (NYU Press)

Stephen Felder

ABSTRACT In Sensual Excess, Amber Jamilla Musser develops an epistemological project that calls into question modes of producing knowledge around black and brown bodies, especially in relationship to femininity and queerness. In doing so, she interrogates the kind of racialized understandings of femininity produced by what Hortense Spillers has called "pornotroping" in order to draw a contrast to something Musser calls "brown jouissance." She is looking for those places where fleshly experience exceeds the ideological constraints of the pornotropic image, developing an epistemology based not on the visual, but on the affective experiences of the flesh. In doing so she analyzes Lyle Ashton Harris's Billie #21 (2002), Judy Chicago's The Dinner Party (1979), Kara Walker's A Subtlety (2014), Mickalene Thomas's Origin of the Universe 1 (2012), Cheryl Dunye's Mommy is Coming (2012), Amber Hawk Swanson and Sandra Ibarra's Untitled Fucking (2013), Carrie Mae Weems's From Here I Saw What Happened and I Cried (1995–1996), Nao Bustamantes's Neapolitan (2003), and Maureen Catabagan's Crush (2010–2012).

Sensual Excess: Queer Femininity and Brown Jouissance. By Amber Jamilla Musser. New York: NYU Press, 2018, pp. 247. ISBN 9781479830954 (paperback). US List \$27.

In Sensual Excess, Amber Jamilla Musser develops an epistemological project that calls into question modes of producing knowledge around black and brown bodies, especially in relationship to femininity and queerness. In doing so, she interrogates the kind of racialized understandings of femininity produced by what Hortense Spillers has called "pornotroping" in order to draw a contrast to something Musser calls "brown jouissance." She is looking for those places where fleshly experience exceeds the ideological constraints of the pornotropic image, developing an epistemology based not on the visual, but on the affective experiences of the flesh. Following Rey Chow, she argues that Foucault's History of Sexuality becomes a "history of the ascendency of whiteness" because of the "epistemological whiteness" that grounds the discourse of sexuality. In contrast, she calls for us to "think with the flesh, with the sensual" as a way to "make new knowledges and new politics" (179).

Musser interrogates a number of visual artistic expressions that, through their visibility, do not produce a transparent access to the black/brown feminine subject (as object), but which confront the viewer at some level with an opacity. Her analysis includes Lyle Ashton Harris's *Billie #21* (2002), Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* (1979), Kara Walker's *A Subtlety* (2014), Mickalene Thomas's *Origin of the Universe 1* (2012), Cheryl Dunye's *Mommy is Coming* (2012), Amber Hawk Swanson and Sandra Ibarra's *Untitled Fucking* (2013), Carrie Mae Weems's *From Here I Saw What Happened and I Cried* (1995-1996), Nao Bustamantes's *Neapolitan* (2003), and Maureen Catabagan's *Crush* (2010-2012). For Musser, to think with this opacity is to be "insistently thinking with the *possibility*, however momentary, of illegibility rather than a stabilized notion of resistance" (11). This

opacity can thus become the basis of a minoritarian strategy to interrogate the images of the pornotrope.

For Musser, "to think with pornotroping is to acknowledge that some people circulate as highly charged affective objects, while simultaneously being positioned outside of the parameters of normative sexuality and subjectivity" (8). She is interested in the space, both conceptual and lived, opened up by this idea. In doing so she extends an idea she explores throughout Sensational Flesh, namely, the idea that black women are posited as the "fleshy limit of theory." Similarly, in this book she wants to use the pornotrope as a way to name "the fleshiness of black and brown people" and to unpack "affective and sensational circuits of power and performance" in relationship to signification so that we might "read otherwise" (9). This strategy to "read otherwise" is crucial to her project, both for how she deploys it in reading the visual displays and performances in the works she analyzes and for the ways in which she invites us to read the (performance) of black and brown femininity "otherwise." In doing so, her strategy is often to focus on excess as a way to circumnavigate "questions of sovereign subjectivity and desire to show us epistemologies rooted in opacity and sensuality" (9). Her aim is for us to embrace the possibility that by developing an epistemology of fleshiness, by "conjoining flesh and knowledge" in a way that "emphasizes theorizing as a fleshy activity, both because theory emerges from flesh—positionality matters—and because theory is enacted by bodies; thought can be located outside of the linguistic, in and through the body and its movements" (11).

For example, in her analysis of Harris's Billie #21 she focuses on the citational nature of Harris's image in which, by linking his body to Holiday's, the image "emphasizes gesture as a mode of knowledge transmission" that "allows us to ponder what exactly one inhabits when one borrows from Holiday" (18). But she also sees the object, the Polariod itself, as a "material manifestation" of what she coins "brown jouissance." The aesthetic that comes to the fore in this relationship between viewer and object "highlights brown jouissance's refusal of transparency." The Polaroid's (re-)production of a ghostly image implies a kind of intimacy with the "image-subject" that Harris's citational gesture evokes while refusing the transparency implied by such an image. Muller argues that "hunger is a form of brown jouissance at work in the sensual excess of the photograph" and to argue in this way is to "suture the citational self and the Polaroid's materialization of temporality to insatiability and vulnerability" enabling us to ask "whether the oscillations between Thing, object, and Other that speak to hunger and its vulnerability are also structured by impermanence, layered temporality, and the plural, porous self of citation" (19). Mussler's analysis often tends towards this kind of interrogative openness, inviting the reader to engage in the kind of fleshly epistemology that is at stake in her project. It is in this way that she develops the idea of brown jouissance as a way to reorient ourselves around the epistemological and political questions so central to racialization, queerness, and femininity, and the relations among the three.

In this regard, Musser contends that queer femininity is an important "order of knowledge" arising from sensuality and fleshiness. This order of knowledge "resists the mandate of depth even as it traffics in self-creation... a spatiality of possibility, of the always-already, of not-quite-return or homeland, of embrace, plurality, spirituality, and sensuality... It is what emerges from and yet exceeds the pornotrope" (178). In multiple ways, she shows how "race disrupts attempts to think sexuality as the primary frame of difference" (178). Her interpretive strategy enacts more than a call to inclusion; it is an attempt to disrupt the "epistemological whiteness of sexuality" by showing how "the black and brown mother and queer femininity disrupt sexuality with sensuality and shift us away from a discourse of desire and individuality toward plural, porous selves and

multiple modes of being-with." According to Musser, the epistemologies that can emerge from the disruption of brown jouissance/queer femininity mobilize "opacity in lieu of transparency, sensuality instead of recognition, and regendre-ing instead of incest" (178).

Musser's concept of "brown jouissance" is inspired by Jacques Lacan's development of the concept of jouissance, especially as presented in Néstor Braunstein's article on jouissance in The Cambridge Companion to Lacan. She wants to use the Lacanian concept to "think more precisely around the politics that surround the sensations of being a body" (12). This move might surprise some Lacanians, but she is interested in Braunstein's description of jouissance as "positivity ... 'something' lived by a body when pleasure stops being pleasure. It is a plus, a sensation that is beyond pleasure" (in Musser, 13). She then interprets this to mean we can think of jouissance as an "excess of sensation" (13). She uses Lacan's assertion that "jouissance is on the side of the [Freudian] Thing," (Lacan contrasted this to Desire, which is "on the side of the Other") to argue that the Thing (instead of the object) "is related to jouissance because it possesses a direction separate from the subject, which is to say it is a space of impossibility and illegibility" (13). But she seems to find something limiting about the ability of the Lacanian concept of jouissance to engage with issues related to race and gender such that her own adaptation, "brown jouissance," attempts to focus on the "moments when Thing, Other, and object converge to form selfhood" (13). Perhaps her idea of brown jouissance can also be seen as an attempt to reconfigure a particularly American history of jouissance accessed by way of the signifiers of slavery and otherness. It would be worthwhile then to read her development of brown jouissance in concert with Sheldon George's reading of the Lacanian concept in Race and Trauma.

Ultimately, Musser's analysis opens up new spaces for thinking the identities shaped by white supremacy by focusing on the emergence of (sensual) excess in "brown jouissance." This brown jouissance, by its very failure to refer to a stable identity, points to what is implied by the subtitle of Lacan's Seminar XX, namely, "The Limits of Love and Knowledge;" for Musser it is the limit of knowledge, the failure of any account to stabilize identity, that emerges from sensual excess.



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Michael Mario Albrecht, "Review of 'Make America Meme Again: The Rhetoric of the Alt-Right' by Heather Suzanne Woods & Leslie A. Hahner (Peter Lang)," *Lateral 8.2* (2019).

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Book Reviews Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019)

Review of *Make America Meme Again: The Rhetoric of the Alt-Right* by Heather Suzanne Woods & Leslie A. Hahner (Peter Lang)

Michael Mario Albrecht

ABSTRACT In Make America Meme Again, Heather Suzanne Woods and Leslie Hahner highlight the central role that memes play in the contemporary political landscape. Specifically, the authors show the ways in which members of the Alt-right have deftly used memes to forward their political agenda, to recruit new members, and to move the so-called "Overton window" rightward to expand the acceptable field of political discourse. In their schema, memes are not simply distractions from important political issues; rather, they function rhetorically and work to constitute the political field. The authors trace the origins of the Alt-right to the murky depths of the internet and show how discourses that emerged from these shadowy depths were able to appeal to a wider audience and cohere around mainstream political discourse. The authors carefully outline the ways that memes circulate, the rhetorical strategies that the Alt-right uses to deploy them, and the ways they work to disavow any charges of racism or extremism that critics might level against them. For Woods and Hahner, memes are the dominant mechanism through which the Alt-right is able to secure and enact its discursive power. Aware of the bleakness of this particular historical moment, Make America Meme Again provides a cogent argument for the ways the Alt-right has been able harness memetic power while also offering a blueprint through which future scholars and activists might reconfigure the present conjuncture so that the Alt-right does not have a stranglehold over the discursive power of memes in the future.

Make America Meme Again: The Rhetoric of the Alt-Right. By Heather Suzanne Woods & Leslie A. Hahner. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2019, pp. 258 (hardcover). ISBN 978-1-4331-5974-9. US List \$89.95.

In the era of Donald J. Trump, a great deal of (mostly virtual) ink has been spilled insisting that tweets, memes, and other defining characteristics of the social media age are mere distractions from truly important issues. Many scholars and pundits bemoan the current state of social media culture and insist that those who wish to defeat Trump and his politics need to cut through the distractions and get to the underlying truth by returning to traditional journalistic practices that existed in the era of print media. In *Make America Meme Again*, rhetorical scholars Heather Suzanne Woods and Leslie A. Hahner put to rest any claims that memes are simply distractions from the "real" politics and issues to which scholars, journalists, politicians, and pundits need to return.

For Woods and Hahner, memes are precisely the terrain upon which members of the Altright have waged political and cultural war and through which the Altright continues to mount political and cultural battles, recruit new members, and bolster the presidency of Donald J. Trump as a symbol of their white nationalist political agenda. The authors argue that "in a number of boards on 4chan and reddit, visual, static memes became a crucial site for advancing not simply the election of Trump but engendering a significant shift in public culture. The Altright made tactical use of memes to create a public presence and attract new members" (3). In their framework, memes are not mere distractions; rather, they function rhetorically in ways that constitute publics and effect political ends. Woods and

Hahner do not equivocate on this point; they insist that "memes are not simply one tactic for the Alt-right—they are the primary rhetorical mechanism grounding its broader work and linking outsiders to its radical views" (5). This statement should be arresting for many scholars of politics and media. There is a wealth of supposedly commonsense consensus among political and media scholars and pundits that the most critical problems in the field are the oligopolistic nature of media ownership and the disinformation campaigns of Fox News or AM talk radio. For many of these scholars, journalists, and pundits, studying memes is a trivial endeavor that should be of secondary importance to these real political economic issues. *Make America Meme Again* offers a shot across the bow at these myopic understandings of media and politics. Woods and Hahner are not simply trying to add their savvy contribution to media studies, political science, and political communication; they are challenging these fields to rethink many of the very premises that currently undergird them.

Woods and Hahner begin their book by exploring the origins of online meme culture on 4chan and reddit. They maintain that because the sites offer degrees of anonymity or pseudonymity, users are able to transgress boundaries of acceptable behavior and social norms, consequently moving the political "Overton window." They maintain that "both reddit and 4chan thrive off of the anonymity/pseudonymity requisite of the sites, serve simultaneously as producers, hosts, and disseminators of memetic content, and constantly negotiate an ambivalent, antagonistic relationship with the public sphere" (26). Reddit and 4chan were able to thrive as sites where reprehensible content circulated with very little outside supervision; simultaneously these sites constructed ties to the mainstream through cat memes and other seemingly innocuous content. They persuasively demonstrate that while the boards on these sites were bringing Caturdays and Lolcats to the mainstream, they were simultaneously developing a culture of unmitigated free speech that luxuriated in racist, misogynist, homophobic language and imagery.

One of the rhetorically shrewdest characteristics of the Alt-right is its ability to dwell in the ambiguous space between irony and sincerity. Because its members' arguments are often couched in the form of memes, they are often able to claim that if they are posting something outrageous, they are just "doing it for the lulz," and that those who are offended are being too politically correct. Woods and Hahner argue that "for the Alt-right, the deployment of ironic images through lulz supplies rhetorical cover for hate-filled messages" (105). They go on to suggest that "such disavowal recognizes the racism contained in far-right memes but refuses to accept responsibility for conveying racism" (105). As such, the form of the meme provides an alibi for the racist (or sexist or homophobic) content of the meme. The original poster of the meme (or "shitposter" in the Internet patois) can always claim that the meme is just a joke and that it shouldn't be taken seriously. Hahner and Woods quickly dismiss this line of argument; they aver that "white supremacy may be clothed in irony but that dressing does not change its impacts." Ultimately, lulz enables the proliferation of Alt-right discourse and reifies the attitudes of white supremacy" (109). While members of the Alt-right might try to use the polysemic nature of irony to coyly avoid the label "racist," Hahner and Woods reject this gambit and insist that regardless of intent, the racist impacts remain the same.

By the final chapter, Woods and Hahner have meticulously shown the origins of memetic culture, the ways that memes allow the Alt-right to use iconic imagery to their advantage, the rhetorical strategies and tactics the Alt-right employs, memes' modes of circulations, and the ways the Alt-right uses memes to silence the opposition. Over the course of the book, the authors present overwhelming evidence for the entrenched power of the Alt-right and its decisive advantage by 2019 in the Great Meme Wars. In the conclusion, "The

Coming Meme Battles," Woods and Hahner note that scholars and activists on the Left are currently working from a huge disadvantage. For them, "the Alt-right is playing a different game than 'normies.' They are winning the meme war, bigly" (217).

The shimmering hope in this otherwise extraordinarily bleak assessment of the present state of contemporary media and politics is the ambivalent nature of memes—they have no fixed valence. While the Right has so far been better at taking up memes, there is nothing inherently conservative about memes. Woods and Hahner point out the seemingly contradictory ability of memes to concomitantly work to unite and divide. They argue that "memes are thus useful in effecting change in two powerful ways: by drawing people together into collectives and by dividing them through chaos, confusion, and antagonism" (212). As such, "memes are an agile, deft and perhaps even dangerous form of communication" (212). However, Woods and Hahner are careful to dispel any facile understanding of memes' lack of fixed valence. They clearly articulate that "memes are not politically neutral. Rather, they are constituted by and through the encultured media ecologies from which they are born and are circulated. In the present tense, those media ecologies skew conservative. That is not to suggest that memes cannot be radical [...] but the present conjuncture of discourse across networks and the rhetorical potency of Altright tactics belies the radicality of the form" (221).

In other words, if scholars, pundits, and political activists want to have any chance the of winning upcoming meme battles, they need to take memes seriously, understand the ways in which they circulate, analyze the rhetorical strategies they employ, and offer strategies of resistance that comport with current media ecologies. The struggle to make memes radical again requires a great deal of hard work on the part of scholars and activists to change the conjuncture to one in which the memetic form does not skew dramatically to the right. Woods and Hahner provide a blueprint for how the Alt-right has been able to transform memes into the dominant tool for their political agenda; subsequent scholars and activists can use this blueprint to work to change the current conjuncture to one more favorable to Leftist politics.



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Corinne Mitsuye Sugino, "Review of 'Postcolonial Grief: The Afterlives of the Pacific Wars in the Americas' by Jinah Kim (Duke University Press)," Lateral 8.2 (2019).

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Book Reviews Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019)

Review of *Postcolonial Grief: The Afterlives* of the Pacific Wars in the Americas by Jinah Kim (Duke University Press)

Corinne Mitsuye Sugino

ABSTRACT Jinah Kim's *Postcolonial Grief* engages with the transnational politics of grief, mourning, and militarization across the Pacific. By examining literature and film produced by Japanese and Korean persons across the Asian diaspora, Kim reveals the ways in which loss and melancholia act as insurgent cultural forces. She considers how, despite silencing mechanisms which valorize narratives of reconciliation and pathologize the grief of colonized subjects, colonialism continues to haunt the present. A rich engagement with the overlapping histories of violence across the Pacific, Kim effectively and carefully considers the relationship between liberal narratives of reconciliation, loss, and colonial violence.

Postcolonial Grief: The Afterlives of the Pacific Wars in the Americas. By Jinah Kim. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019. Pp. 200. (paper) ISBN 9781478002796

In an exploration of twentieth and twenty-first century US militarization across the Pacific, Jinah Kim contends with how melancholia and loss act as insurgent cultural forces. This text can be situated within Kim's larger scholarly trajectory, which explores the transnational politics of migration, war, and postcolonialism, especially between Asia and the Americas. In *Postcolonial Grief*, Kim reveals how histories of colonial violence continue to haunt the present, contending that liberal discourses of progress only address loss through reconciliation and "proper" healing. This demand for reconciliation enlists suffering Asian figures in service of the nation state's project of capitalist expansion. While Western narratives of mourning revolve around progress, reconciliation, and closure, Kim asks us to face how unresolved violence in the Pacific constitutes an incommensurable melancholia. Kim argues that this melancholia creates fear of an uncertain future and is surveilled, silenced, and demonized by the state as a pathological inability to move on from past violence. Thus, melancholia and loss constitute insurgent cultural forces that threaten the silences and forced reconciliation surrounding colonial violence by the US and Japan.

For Kim postcolonialism does not designate the end of colonialism, but instead the way decolonization is deferred and colonialism persists in a modified state. "Postcolonial grief" names the "structure of feeling across the Pacific Arena" produced by cultural products that seek to address state violence and the ways in which they reference each other's histories (17). Grief and mourning not only operate temporally as they yoke the past into the present/future, but also spatially insofar as certain spaces remain haunted by unresolved violence. Kim's theoretical framework builds on Fanonian anti-colonialism, as well as psychoanalysis and transnational feminism, turning to literature and film produced by Japanese and Korean persons across the Asian diaspora in order to consider their experiences and how they engage with a history enmeshed in colonial violence. As she

explains in the introduction, these cultural products reveal the influence of US militarism in the area and the affective forces they continue to exert.

Kim does not shy away from the complexities of multiple histories of violence but instead addresses how they interact, enable, and draw on each other. Chapter One reads Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth alongside Hisaye Yamamoto's "A Fire in Fontana." Pathologized and rendered illegitimate, grief by colonized subjects constitutes a form of insurgency because they refuse closure or assimilation to colonialism. Chapter Two considers the 1992 Los Angeles Riots, investigating Dai Sil Kim-Gibson's Sa-I-Gu and Héctor Tobar's The Tattooed Soldier. These works connect the riots to a larger anti-militarist stance. They enact "racial cognitive remapping" that facilitates linkages between Asian, Black, and Latino experiences of state violence and connect "the neoliberal economy and the structure of global cities such as Los Angeles to U.S. military domination across the Pacific Arena" (62). Chapter Three turns to "transpacific noir" in literature and film, arguing that the refusal of colonial subjects to heal functions as a source of anxiety in the genre. Investigating Sam Fuller's The Crimson Kimono and Naomi Hirahara's Summer of the Big Bachi, Kim demonstrates how unhealed wounds are conjured through the very silence imposed on them. She attends to Korean narratives that challenge the legacy of Japanese colonialism and US silencing mechanisms by refusing the language of overcoming and resiliency. Chapter Four juxtaposes Teresa Ralli and José Watanabe's Antigona, with Ann Patchett's Bel Canto, and Jennifer Egan's "The Liberation of Lori Benson," in addressing the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (MRTA) 1996 takeover of the Japanese Ambassador's home in Lima. In doing so, Kim maps the way in which Patchett's and Egan's texts represent neoliberal feminist narratives that silence mourning and invisibilize state violence. The figure of Antigone-whose brother's dead body is left to rot publicly in order to terrorize the city-presents an emblem for thinking about Peru and the MRTA members killed in the crisis. Moreover, it points to how the US "colluded and created conditions abetting the refusal to see state terrorisms" (89). Even in the epilogue Kim refuses the demand for closure, turning to Obama's visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial in 2016 and the ways that it effaced the unrecognized Korean victims of Japanese violence.

Though the book presents a rich engagement with overlapping histories of Japanese and Korean people, the relationship many of these figures have to enduring forces of antiblackness is less clear. Chapter One engages with Fanon in relation to Yamamoto's "A Fire in Fontana," set during the battle for redress for Japanese internment. In addition to Kim's engagement with anticolonialism, I would have liked to see a more robust engagement with Fanon's more specific analysis of blackness. Kim's acknowledgement that black people were not afforded the same luxuries as Yamamoto's Japanese protagonist was a missed opportunity to more thoroughly engage the complexity offered by Fanon's comparative analysis of the violence faced by black and non-black colonized subjects. Additionally, in Chapter Two, I wish Kim would have contended more with the legacies of anti-blackness perpetuated by Korean storeowners leading up to the LA riots. For example, in addition to the LAPD beating of Rodney King, the 1991 murder of Latasha Harlins by Korean-American storeowner Soon Ja Du also served as an important catalyst for the rebellion. This could have contributed to an even more nuanced understanding of the overlapping histories of violence at play. Nevertheless, these oversights do not undermine the importance of Kim's work. She provides fruitful grounds for considering the forces of colonial domination and postcolonial loss on the present. Postcolonial Grief powerfully uncovers overlapping histories of violence across the Pacific and carefully considers the relationship between grief, silencing, and reconciliation. Kim convincingly demonstrates the way that melancholia and loss constitute powerful forces in the Pacific as wounds that refuse to heal yet open up new (im)possibilities for relating to violence

outside of liberal humanist frameworks of reconciliation. *Postcolonial Grief* is thus invaluable for those interested in affect studies, settler colonial studies, cultural studies, communication, and Asian-American history.



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Patrice D Douglass, "Review of 'Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval' by Saidiya Hartman (W. W. Norton & Company)," *Lateral 8.2* (2019).

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Book Reviews Issue 8.2 (Fall 2019)

Review of Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval by Saidiya Hartman (W. W. Norton & Company)

Patrice D Douglass

ABSTRACT This review considers how Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval poses a challenge to the reader. The invitation is to stay immersed within the everyday lives of Black women and girls, who navigated the terrains of New York City and Philadelphia at the turn of the twentieth century, without fleeting into spectacle or pathology. One may assume that such is an effortless proposition that is carried simply by the desire to think about Black women. However, Hartman tacitly demonstrates that a tremendous counter-historiography must be amassed to write the stories of those who have been underwritten by the tales of politics, great Black men, shining Black starlets, or the widely pathologized Black female figure. Thus, Wayward Lives weaves together a beautiful narrative of the social upheaval of Black women and girls at the dawning of Northern urban space, and what would later become known as the Black shetto. At the same time, Hartman exposes the limits of the official record and narratives which relegate the lives of Black women as tertiary, as opposed to an integral political history in its own right.

Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval. By Saidiya Hartman. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019, 464 pp. (hardcover) ISBN 978-0-393-35762-2. US List: \$28.95.

In Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval, Saidiya Hartman poses a challenge to her reader: to stay immersed within the everyday lives of Black women and girls, who navigated the terrains of New York City and Philadelphia at the turn of the twentieth century, without fleeing into spectacle or pathology. One may assume that such is an effortless proposition that is carried simply by the desire to think about Black women. However, Hartman tacitly demonstrates that a tremendous counterhistoriography must be amassed to write the stories of those who have been underwritten by the tales of politics, great Black men, shining Black starlets, or the widely pathologized Black female figure. Thus, Wayward Lives weaves together a beautiful narrative of the social upheaval of Black women and girls at the dawning of Northern urban space, and what would later become known as the Black ghetto. At the same time, Hartman exposes the limits of the official record and narratives which relegate the lives of Black women as tertiary, as opposed to an integral political history in its own right.

Breaking with the traditional academic mold, *Wayward Lives* offers a new and profound approach to writing. The style embodies what Hartman has termed elsewhere a "critical fabulation," which, "jeopardize[s] the status of the event, to displace the received or authorized account, and to imagine what might have happened or might have been said or might have been done." This technique is encapsulated in delicate yet impactful and gripping prose. The narrative flows like the most captivating novel, re-casting the lives of its "cast of characters" as factual portrayals. These are not (im)possible stories but the

immanent unfolding of Black women's lives as they are handled with a Black feminist care, in the wake of the failed promises of emancipation and in the intervals of freedom. Thus, Hartman is less interested in settling the age-old score of how to position agency and structure in historical revivals of Black life and more interested in movement, refusal, repetition, banality, and stasis in the ordinary lives of Black girls and women. Violence and violation are undeniable presences in waiting. Wayward Lives is about Blackness in general, rather than the unique experience of any individual Black woman, girl, or queer person. Furthermore, it posits that politics can arise from ordinary spaces or from the everyday refusals taken on by Black women and girls. These figures exist queerly and otherwise, by refusing the scripts of life that were placed upon them.

Wayward Lives is structured into three books. Slavery, emancipation, and the great migration are figured centrally as the preconditions for thought that configure and align each section. Hartman does not disavow the symbolic integrity that is lost during slavery; the text holds on to social death in the afterlife of abolition. It thus enlivens the realities of existing in the in-between of subjective categorizations. This is the tale of those who lack proper names. Each section of Wayward Lives demonstrates that the age divide between being a Black woman or girl is murky, Black family and kinship structures are ever changing, place is never unfettered, and Black sexuality, however performed, is rendered deviant. Traditional historiography embodies a refusal to sit with such thick disavowals of being. Yet, Hartman animates these fraught spaces by suggesting that being honest about the all-encompassing deracination of Black life does not foreclose politics. Instead, it asks that politics appear otherwise, in the minor figures of history and in the everyday maneuvers to obtain mere life, rather than in the spectacular few granted exceptional Black status.

Book One, "She Makes An Errant Path through the City," introduces an ensemble of figures, a collection of geographical landscapes, and a set of historical predicaments. This section chronicles how assumptions about Black women's sexuality and sexual practices orient views of history. In this respect, Hartman spends a considerable amount of time tarrying with the early works of W.E.B. DuBois, particularly The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study. In this text, DuBois paints a pathological sexual tale of two women perusing a shoe store window. Hartman critically fabulates about the lives of these women, while simultaneously weaving in a reading of DuBois, to suggest that he was not untainted by the lures of the sexual waywardness that he projects onto these two unnamed women. Book Two, "The Sexual Geography of the Black Belt," chronicles the social decay and queer possibilities that arise from attempts to arrest, or place hold upon, Black women's sexual freedoms. Whether by marking all movement by Black women as prostitution or through sexual abuse and compulsory heterosexuality, Hartman shows how Black women's sexuality sparked crises that incited riots, loomed in threats of incarceration, and produced beauty in queer performances. Lastly, the third and last book, "Beautiful Experiments," concludes with riotous noise, queer possibilities usurped by misogynoir, and the desire to break free. This section offers up the stories of those who resisted, in a "minor key," the confinement of reformatories, the constricting forces of domestic labor, and the failed security of heteronormativity. It reveals the story of those who broke free, if only temporarily, stepping willfully outside of the bounds of what was expected of their ordinariness.

Wayward Lives is nothing short of a gift. The architecture of the book is itself a dense archival exploration. The pages are filled with caption-less photos of Black women, girls, queer folk, men, and neighborhoods in ruin. It lacks citational subscripts throughout the body of the text however, it italicizes and employs quotations to mark statements and expressions grafted from other materials. A full engagement with the text requires the

reader to exert an extra level of care. An attentive reader must page the notes, revisit the cast of characters, connect the themes across stories, sections, and breaks. The task is not to page the book from cover to cover then set it down, but to pause, move forward, return, reconsider, and explore further its errant possibilities. An investment in taking Black women and girls seriously as the progenitors of a cultural politics that challenges and animates understandings of insurgency and radicality, Hartman demonstrates, requires a precise and dedicated focus. All in all, *Wayward Lives* is not a casual read. Given the significance of its excavation, it cannot be. Instead, Hartman pushes the reader not to spectate the lives of the cast of characters she presents, but to hold true the centrality of Black refusal and everyday survival as amassing a political framework that shaped the course of a century.

Notes

1. Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," Small Axe 26, no. 2 (June 2008): 11. 2



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Review of *Talking White Trash: Mediated Representations and Lived Experiences of White-Working Class People* by Tasha R. Dunn (Routledge)

Holly Willson Holladay

ABSTRACT In *Talking White Trash*, Tasha R. Dunn provides a multi-methodological investigation into the representations of white working-class people on screen and the everyday lives of members of the white working-class. Her work provides a nuanced way to understand the reinforcement of stereotypical depictions of this population, as well as how the white working class "talks back" to these representations. The book draws from the current political and cultural moment to assert how white working-class identity is constructed, and advocates for a more complex reading of this population than is often provided in mediated texts.

Talking White Trash: Mediated Representations and Lived Experiences of White-Working Class People. By Tasha R. Dunn, New York, USA: Routledge, 2018, 158 pp. (hardcover) 9781138486348. US List: \$150.00. (paperback) ISBN 9781138486355. US List: \$44.95.

During the months following the 2016 election of Donald Trump, culture writers penned countless essays exploring the connection between Trump's ascendency and the white working class. As the common narrative would have it, this voting bloc, frustrated by job loss and general economic anxiety, pledged allegiance en masse to Trump, whose campaign rhetoric seemed tailor-made to address their concerns. This analysis, however, often remained insufficient, offering conjecture based on voting statistics loosely supplemented with newsworthy quips from Trump voters. In Talking White Trash: Mediated Representations and Lived Experiences of White Working-Class People, Tasha R. Dunn engages with this population to investigate what may be learned about the white working class through the intersections of media and everyday life. A multimethodological approach, drawing from media texts featuring working-class white characters, in-depth interviews with the white working class, and her own experiences as a working-class white woman, is a significant strength of her work. Rather than relying on one mode of analysis, Dunn masterfully weaves together text, narrative, and authoethnographic accounts; in doing so, she endeavors to take seriously and to provide a nuanced portrait of a population which "has often been the butt of cultural jokes" (11).

Dunn begins *Talking White Trash* by offering the aforementioned cultural and political context, as well as situating her own experiences within the framework of her research. She then traces the history of both "white trash" as a raced and classed category, and white working-class representation in mediated spaces. Connecting the current political and economic climate with mediated histories serves as an impetus for her work; as she points out, "history has shown that popular and problematic images of the white working class thrive during times of economic and social decline," reinforcing the notion that the

white working class is "deserving of their lot in life and undeserving of anything that could improve it" (38).

Indeed, in the years following the 2008 economic downturn, depictions of the white working class proliferated through the "redneck reality" subgenre, which, like other reality programming, relies on a "rhetoric of realism...to authenticate the stereotypes of disenfranchised populations that are portrayed" (47). Dunn then turns to one of the preeminent "redneck reality" programs of the recession era, TLC's *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*, to offer an account of the ways in which this authentication functions. Her close textual analysis of the series, which features a white working-class family, reveals how neoliberal rhetorics of surveillance and personal responsibility intersect with the performative spectacle of reality television to underscore the family's presentation of "inappropriate whiteness." As Dunn argues, placing the onus of responsibility solely on this family obfuscates the structural barriers that prevent upward economic mobility for white working-class families.

Articulating mediated stereotypes of the white working class is but one way of understanding their place in the contemporary cultural milieu, and has been addressed many times before. Where Talking White Trash stands out among this body of research begins in the book's third chapter, in which Dunn combines autoethnographic experiences and interview data from her participants to paint a rich portrait of the lived experiences of the white working class. Dunn's interactive focus groups were extensive; she met multiple times with each self-identified working-class family that she recruited through word-ofmouth and online postings for interviews that lasted up to two hours. Her interviews centered on both what working class whiteness means in today's America, and the evaluation of working-class white representation on screen. Through the words of her participants, Dunn is able to address many of those structural inequalities missing from mediated depictions of the working class; she takes on the mobile home industry, forprofit higher education, and the healthcare industry to ultimately conclude that many in the working class "are stuck in a liminal space, craving and seeking mobility but finding immobility due to a lack of jobs as well as affordable housing, childcare, education and healthcare" (91). Perhaps the most enlightening element of Dunn's work comes from her participants' readings of working-class television and film. While she admits to bristling at these representations herself, she is surprised to learn how the working-class families with whom she spoke had much more complicated and complex feelings; they expressed dismay at the reductionist and stereotypical depictions of the white working class, but also routinely drew comparisons between themselves and their families and what they saw in those portrayals. Dunn points out that her participants' interpretations were most commonly illustrative of the push-pull of a negotiated reading position, "alluding to the multilayered, diverse, and contradictory ways media messages are decoded" (113).

Talking White Trash is written with a narrative and accessible voice. This approach dovetails neatly with her rejection of viewing media audiences, especially those in the working class who are stereotyped as unintelligent or uneducated, as incapable of consuming media critically. Although her participants may not have the theoretical language accessible to academics, her interpretation of their insights makes a compelling case for the ways that they consume media through a critical lens. Specifically, she grounds their observations in both cultural conversations about the white working class and scholarship about media reception; connecting participants' lived experiences and understandings of media to broader discourses about race and class reinforces her aim to complicate the narrow conception of the white working class in the popular imaginary. Indeed, evoking Stuart Hall's Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse, Dunn demonstrates that audience interpretations provide a necessary complement to scholarly

readings of mediated texts, especially given that her interview participants' reading of working-class representation diverged from her own. She urges her readers to "value criticism outside academic spaces" (118), echoing the assertions of reception studies researchers.

Dunn's book is characterized by the self-reflexivity central to autoethnographic methods. Her transparency about the research process and the conclusions she has reached necessarily inform not only what we take from her work, but also how we should interpret all claims made from participant data. Moments of Dunn's work are vulnerable, particularly as she grapples with the liminal, "insider/outsider" space she occupies as an upwardly mobile academic returning to working-class communities as a researcher. Yet, the both/and role works from the other direction as well, and Dunn writes candidly throughout the book about the performances of middle-classness necessary to be taken seriously as an academic. Dunn's honest reflections about these tensions extend beyond *Talking White Trash*, serving as a necessary reminder of how the academy is a space marked by race, class, and other aspects of identity. It is only through work like Dunn's that we may begin to pull back the curtain to expose these divisions in higher education, in media, in politics, and in culture and, as Dunn notes, serve as "a springboard from which to jump and discover new knowledge" (141).





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